

BATSFORD ALGEBRAIC CHESS OPENINGS series edited by R.G. Wade

Benko Counter-Gambit

David Levy

1 d4 f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5



Benko Counter-Gambit

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To Paul, who has given far more to chess than most players will ever appreciate.

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SERIES EDITOR: R. G. WADE

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DAVID LEVY

1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5

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Symbols

+	Check
=	Balanced position
±	Slight advantage for White
±	Slight advantage for Black
±	Clear advantage for White
±	Clear advantage for Black
± ±	Winning advantage for White
± ±	Winning advantage for Black
∞	The position is unclear
i	Good move
i?	Interesting move deserving attention
!i	Dubious move
?	Weak move
??	Blunder
1-0	Black resigned
0-1	White resigned
½-½	Draw agreed
Ch	Championship
Corres	Correspondence Game
W or B	at the side of each diagram indicates which player is to move.

Preface

The Benko Counter-Gambit represents the most important contribution to opening theory for a quarter of a century. Before Pal Benko made the gambit 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 playable, in 1967, it was extraordinarily difficult for players of the Black pieces to play for the initiative when facing 1 d4. Now, thanks to Benko, many 1 d4 players almost quake with fear when they see Black's b-pawn advance on the third move. Although White acquires an extra pawn he does so at the cost of relinquishing the initiative for at least twenty moves and allowing his opponent many open lines for his pieces. There are those who will claim that the Benko Counter-Gambit is 'unsound' or 'busted' but anyone who thinks that chess is so simple will often be unpleasantly surprised to find that despite having an extra pawn he is struggling to maintain the balance. In master chess Black's percentage score with the Benko Counter-Gambit has, in recent years, been very favourable, in comparison with the more traditional King's Indian and Nimzo.

Benko's own book on the Gambit appeared five years ago and since then there have been a wealth of games to enrich our theoretical knowledge and practical understanding of the opening. It is therefore high time that an up-to-date volume should appear, and it is with this in mind that the present work was commissioned.

My research owes much to Benko's own games and writings. I have made extensive use of my own library and that of Bob Wade, and I have consulted Kevin O'Connell's collection of pre-war magazines. Special thanks must go to Miss Inneke Bakker, Secretary General of FIDE, who kindly photocopied the relevant section of the Becker files. I should also like to thank Margaret Fitzjames who typed my manuscript, Len Perry who wrote out the diagrams and John Morrell who read the proofs.

DNLL

London, March 1978

1 Historical Introduction

It is hardly possible to determine exactly when any particular chess opening or variation was played for the very first time, and so it is with the Benko Gambit. It seems most likely that the gambit was born in Sweden during the 1920s and it was the Swedish duo Lundin and Stoltz and the Czech master Opocensky who introduced it in international competition. Apart from a number of games which transposed to the Benko Gambit Declined via the move order 1 d4 ♟f6 2 ♟f3 c5 3 d5 b5 4 c4, the earliest Benko Gambit games that I have been able to find are:

1) Ståhlberg–Stoltz, Sweden 1933 (see chapter 20, page 100).

2) Keres–Opocensky, Pärnu 1937: 1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 c5 4 d5 b5 5 cb d6 6 ♟g2 ♟g7 7 ♟c3 0–0 8 ♟f3 a6 9 ba ♟xa6 10 0–0 ♟b6 11 ♟d2 ♟c7 12 b3 ♟a6 (by transposition we have arrived at a recognizable Benko Gambit position) 13 ♟b2 ♟fb8 14 ♟c2 ♟b4 15 ♟ab1 ♟b5 16 ♟xb5 ♟xb5 17

a3 ♟g4 18 ♟fe1 ♟h5 19 h3 ♟d7 20 g4 ♟g5 21 ♟f3 ♟xd5 22 ♟e5 ♟e6 23 ♟xd7 ♟xd7 24 ♟xa8 ♟xa8 25 ♟d3 d5 26 ♟ed1 d4 27 ♟bc1 ♟c8 28 b4 h5 29 ♟xc5 e5 30 ♟xe5 ♟xg4 31 ♟e4 ♟c5 32 ♟xd4 ♟c8 33 ♟c3 ♟h7 34 ♟d5 1–0.

3) Eliskases–Opocensky, Prague 1937: 1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♟c3 c5 4 d5 d6 5 e4 b5 6 cb ♟g7 7 ♟d3 0–0 8 ♟ge2 a6 9 0–0 ab 10 ♟xb5 ♟a6 11 ♟g3 ♟xb5 12 ♟xb5 ♟bd7 13 ♟d2 h5 14 ♟c2 ♟b6 15 b3 ♟c7 16 ♟c3 h4 17 ♟ge2 h3 18 ♟g3 hg 19 ♟xg2 ♟c8 20 a4 ♟bd7 21 ♟abl e6 22 ♟f4 ed 23 ed ♟e8 24 ♟fd1 ♟e5 25 ♟xe5 ♟xe5 26 ♟d3 ♟h5 27 ♟f3 ♟d7 28 ♟e1 ♟ac8 29 ♟e4 ♟xg3 30 hg ♟b7 31 ♟xe5 ♟xe5 32 ♟b5 ♟d7 33 ♟d3 ♟e8 34 b4 ♟a8 35 bc dc 36 ♟c4 ♟f8 37 ♟d1 ♟b7 38 ♟gl ♟a6 39 d6 ♟c6 40 ♟d5 ♟xd5 41 ♟xd5 c4 42 ♟d4 ♟d8 43 ♟xc4 ♟xd6 44 a5 ♟f8 45 a6 1–0.

4) van Scheltinga–Opocensky, Buenos Aires Olympiad 1939: 1

d4 ♖f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 c5 4 d5 d6 5 e4 b5 6 cb ♘g7 7 ♗f3 0-0 8 ♙e2 a6 9 0-0 ab 10 ♙xb5 ♖b6 11 ♗d2 ♙a6 12 ♗c4 ♖b7 13 ♙xa6 ♖xa6 14 ♖e2? (better is 14 ♗e3. The pin on the c4 knight is uncomfortable.) 14 ... ♗bd7 15 ♙e3 (correct is 15 ♖el intending ♗e3, but not 15 ♗e3? ♖xe2 16 ♗xe2 ♗xe4) 15 ... ♖fb8 (threatening 16 ... ♗b6 17 ♗xb6 ♖xe2 18 ♗xe2 ♖xb6, winning back the pawn with advantage.) 16 ♖ab1? (16 ♖fel was still best) 16 ... ♗e8 17 ♖fel? (too late. 17 ♙d2 was the only move) 17 ... ♙xc3 18 bxc3 ♖xb1 0-1 (After 19 ♖xb1 ♗e5 wins a piece).

After the Second World War there was a substantial increase in the number of international chess events played each year and with this increase came a proliferation of almost every opening and variation. Not only were there many more games being played with every opening but there was also an increase in the quantity of theoretical material being published.

In the February 1946 issue of *Shakhmaty v SSSR* ('Chess in the USSR') a Soviet player named Argunov wrote an article about the gambits that begin with the moves 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5. Since Argunov lived in Kuibyshev, a town that lies on the river Volga, it

seemed only reasonable for Argunov to give these gambits the collective name 'Volga Gambit', and even to the present day this is what the Benko Gambit is called in the Soviet Union and satellite countries. Most of Argunov's article was devoted to the variations that continue 4 cb a6 5 ba e6 and 4 cb a6 5 e3 e6. The only pure Benko Gambit continuation that he examined was that beginning 4 g3, though he did comment that Aronin's idea, 4 f3, is also interesting. Argunov's analysis after 4 g3 runs as follows: 4 ... bc 5 ♙g2 d6 6 ♗f3 (6 e4 ♗bd7 7 f4 g6 8 ♖a4 ♙b7 9 ♗c3 e6 is not good for White) 6 ... g6 7 ♗fd2 ♗bd7 8 ♗xc4 ♗b6 9 0-0 ♙g7 10 ♗c3 0-0 11 ♗a5 ♙d7 12 ♙d2 ♖c8 13 ♖el ♖a6 14 ♗c6 ♗bxd5 15 e4 ♙xc6 16 ed ♙d7 17 ♖xe7 ♖ae8 18 ♖xe8 (if 18 ♖el ♖xe7 19 ♖xe7 ♖e8 ♢ ♢) 18 ... ♖xe8. This position was reached in a game in Kuibyshev. Black has by far the more active position.

Opočensky continued to employ the gambit (via transposition) after the war but it did not achieve serious recognition at the international level until Lundin played it twice (once by transposition) in the 1948 Interzonal tournament in Saltsjöbaden. His game against Bronstein from round 8 went as follows: 1 d4

♖f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 d6 4 ♖c3 g6 5 e4
 b5 6 cb ♗g7 7 ♗e2 a6 8 ♖f3 0-0 9
 ba ♗×a6 10 ♗×a6 ♖×a6 11 0-0
 ♖d7 12 ♗g5 ♖b8 13 ♖d2 ♖e8 14
 ♖ab1 (preparing for a3 followed
 by b4) 14... ♖a5 15 ♖fc1 ♖c7 16
 ♗h6 ♗f6 17 a3 ♖b3 (this motif of
 blockading the b-pawn with the
 rook recurs 27 years later in
 Portisch-Vasyukov, Manila
 1975—see page 44) 18 ♖c2 ♖eb8
 19 ♖d2 ♖3b7 20 ♖c4 ♖a6 21
 ♖a4 ♖×a4 22 ♖×a4 ♖b5
 (threatening 23... ♖a7, and if 23
 b3 ♖d4!) 23 b4 ♖d4 (if 23...
 ♖a7 24 bc and now if 24... ♖×a4
 25 c6 ♖f8 26 c7 ♖c8 27 ♖b6 ± ±
 or 24... dc 25 e5 ♖×e5 26 ♖×e5
 ♗×e5 27 ♖×c5 ♖×a3 28 ♖×b8+
 ♗×b8 29 ♖a6! ± ±) 24 ♗f1 ♗g7
 (or 24... cb 25 ♖a5 ♖b5 26 ab)
 25 ♗e3 ♖a8 26 bc! ♖×b1 27
 ♖×b1 dc (if 27... ♖×a4 28 ♖b6!
 ♖×b6 29 cb ♖a8 30 b7 ♖b8 31
 a4 ± ±) 28 ♖b6 ♖b8 29 a4 ♖×b6
 30 ♖×b6 ♖×b6 31 ♖×b6 ♖b3 32
 ♗e2 ♗c3 33 ♗d3 ♗a5 34 ♗c4
 1-0.

The next time that Lundin
 essayed the gambit was in round 19.
 He chose the correct move order, 3
 ... b5, but arrived at the same
 position as in his game with
 Bronstein but with a tempo less.
 Nevertheless he won the game,
 though not without considerable
 help from his opponent:
 Szabó-Lundin 1 d4 ♖f6 2 c4 c5 3

d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 ba g6 6 ♖c3 ♗×a6
 7 e4 d6 (In his notes to the game in
 the tournament bulletin Romanovsky
 recommended 7... ♗×f1
 rather than the text move. So far as
 I am able to determine this
 comment of Romanovsky's was the
 first published suggestion to the
 effect that Black does better to
 exchange bishops himself rather
 than allow White to do so.) 8 ♗×a6
 ♖×a6 9 ♖f3 ♗g7 10 0-0 ♖d7 11
 ♗f4 0-0 (This is the position
 reached in the previous game with
 the exception that White has
 played the extra move ♗f4.) 12
 ♖e2 ♖c7 13 ♖fc1 (White would
 do better to prepare for e5 by 13
 ♖fe1, and if 13... ♖e5 14
 ♖×e5 ±) 13... ♖fb8 14 ♖ab1
 ♗×c3 15 ♖×c3? (he should have
 recaptured with the pawn.) 15...
 ♖a5 (threatening both 16...
 ♖×a2 and 16... ♖×c3) 16 ♖d2
 ♖c7? (Black cannot play 16...
 ♖×a2?? because of 17 ♖a3, but
 much stronger is the thematic 16
 ... ♖×b2! 17 ♖×b2 ♖×c3, an
 idea which was not yet known in
 1948.) 17 ♖a3 ♖b6 18 ♖×a8
 ♖×a8 19 a3 ♖b5 20 ♗e3 ♖a4 21
 ♖cl? (White should not leave his
 b-pawn without protection. Cor-
 rect was 21 f4 ♖d4 22 ♖d3,
 threatening 23 b3 or 23 b4) 21...
 ♖d4 22 ♗×d4 cd! 23 ♖f3 ♖f6 24
 ♖c2? (24 ♖c8+ ♗g7) 24... ♖a5
 (threat 25... ♖c5) 25 ♖d2 d3 26

♞c7? (after 26 ♞xd3 ♞xb2 27 ♚c8+ ♜g7 28 ♜c4 ♞cl+ 29 ♞fl ♞xf1+ 30 ♜xf1 ♚a4! 31 f3 ♜d7 32 ♜d2, the game would have been drawn.) 26 ... ♞xb2 27 e5 (bad is 27 ♞xa5 ♞xc1+ 28 ♜fl ♜xe4, or 27 ♞d8+ ♜g7 28 ♚c8 ♞al+ 29 ♜fl ♜h6 30 ♞xa5 ♜xe4 with the threat of ... d2) 27 ... ♞xd2 28 ef ef 29 h4 ♜g7 30 ♞c3 ♞xc3 31 ♚xc3 ♚xd5 32 ♚cl g5 (also winning is 32 ... ♚a5 33 ♚c3 d2 34 ♚d3 ♚xa3 35 ♚xd2 ♚a6) 33 ♜fl gh 34 ♚al f5 35 a4 ♜f6 36 ♜el (if 36 a5 ♚e5! 37 a6 d2 38 a7 ♚a5 干干) 36 ... ♚e5+ 37 ♜d2 ♚e2+ 38 ♜xd3 ♚xf2 39 a5 ♚xg2 40 a6 ♚g8 41 ♜c4 f4 42 ♜d5 ♜f5 43 ♜c6 f3 44 ♜b7 ♚e8 0-1.

The first major development in Benko Gambit theory came in 1949, when Golombek tried a new plan involving the fianchetto of White's f1 bishop. The idea was to keep the e-pawn on e2 in order to avoid weakening the f1-a6 diagonal. **Golombek-Seftc, Trenčianske-Teplice 1949:** 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 ba ♜xa6 6 ♜c3 d6 7 g3 g6 8 ♜g2 ♜g7 9 ♜h3 (This move is still played even today—see chapter 9, page 48) 9 ... 0-0 10 0-0 ♞b6 11 ♚el ♜bd7 12 ♜h1 (not 12 f4 at once because of 12 ... c4+ 13 ♜h1 ♜c5 and ... ♜d3) 12 ... ♜e5 13 ♞c2 ♚fb8 14 f4 ♜c4 15 b3 (if 15

♜f2 ♞a5 16 ♜d3 ♜g4 干干) 15 ... ♞b4! 16 bc ♜e4! 17 ♞xe4 (on 17 ♚b1 comes 17 ... ♞xc3 18 ♞xc3 ♜xc3 19 ♚xb8+ ♚xb8; followed by the advance ... c4; or if 17 ♜xe4 ♜xc3 18 ♜d2 ♜xd2 19 ♚eb1 ♞xc4 20 ♞xc4 ♜xc4) 17 ... ♜xc3 18 ♜d2 ♜xd2 19 ♚ed1 ♜c3 20 ♚abl ♞xc4 (the point of Black's plan. If 21 ♞xc4 ♜xc4 22 ♚xb8+ — or 22 ♚bc1 ♜xe2 干干 — 22 ... ♚xb8 23 ♚cl ♜d4 干干) 21 ♞xe7 ♚xb1 22 ♚xb1 ♞xa2 23 ♜e4 ♞a4 24 ♜f3 ♚e8 25 ♞xd6 ♜xe2 26 ♜g2 ♞c2 27 ♚gl ♜d4 28 ♞d7 ♚f8 29 d6 ♜xgl 30 ♜xgl c4 31 ♜c6 (if 31 ♜d5 ♞d3 32 ♞b7 c3 33 d7 ♚d8 干干) 31 ... c3 32 h3 ♞dl 33 ♞e7 c2 0-1.

Bronstein was so impressed with the ideas behind the gambit that in 1953 he used it against Taimanov in the Candidates' Tournament in Zürich: 1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 g6 4 ♜c3 d6 5 e4 b5 6 cb ♜g7 7 ♜f3 0-0 8 ♜e2 a6 9 ba ♜xa6 10 0-0 ♞c7 11 ♚el ♜bd7 12 ♜xa6 ♚xa6 (preferring the manoeuvre ... ♜bd7-b6-a4 to Lundin's ... ♜xa6-c7-b5) 13 ♞e2 ♚fa8 14 h3 (14 e5 de 15 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 16 ♞xe5 ♞xe5 17 ♚xe5 ♜f8 干干) 14 ... ♜b6 15 ♜g5 ♜e8 16 ♜d2 ♜a4 17 ♜xa4 ♚xa4 18 ♜c3 ♜xc3 (18 ... ♚xa2?! 19 ♚xa2 ♚xa2 20 e5!) 19 bc ♞a5 20 ♞d3 ♞a6 21 ♞d2 ♚xa2 22 ♚xa2 ♞xa2 23 e5

♖xd2 24 ♗xd2 de 25 ♜xe5 ♕f8
26 ♗b3?! (26 ♕f1 was safer, but
Taimanov was still playing for a
win) 26 ... c4 27 ♗c5 ♜a1+ 28
♕h2 ♗f6! 29 ♗e4 ♗d7 30 ♜g5
♜a2 31 ♜g4 f5 32 ♜f4 ♗b6 33
♗g5 ♗xd5 34 ♜d4 (34 ♜xc4
♜xf2 35 ♗xh7+ ♕g7 36 ♗g5
♜xg2+ 37 ♕xg2 ♗e3+ ♢♢) 34
... ♗b6 35 ♜d8+ ♕g7 36 f4 h6
37 ♗e6+ ♕f7 38 ♗d4 ♗a4 39
♜c8 ♗xc3 40 ♜xc4 ♗d5 41 ♗f3
♜xg2+ 42 ♕h1 ♜f2 0-1.

The first main line of the gambit in its modern form was the system in which Black recaptures on a6 with his bishop and meets the advance e4 with ... ♗xf1 (Romanovsky's suggestion), thereby forcing White to lose time by castling 'by hand'. This variation was first employed in 1955. **Rabar-Milić, Zagreb 1955:** 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 ba ♗xa6 6 ♗c3 d6 7 e4 ♗xf1 8 ♕xf1 g6 9 g3 ♗g7 10 ♕g2 ♗bd7 11 f4 0-0 12 ♗f3 ♖b6 13 ♜el c4 14 ♜e2 ♗c5 15 ♗e3 ♗fd7 16 ♗d4 ♗xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♖a6 18 ♜ad1 f6 19 h4 ♜ab8 20 h5 gh 21 ♗h4 ♕h8 22 ♗f5 ♜g8 23 ♗xe7 ♜g4 24 ♜h1 ♗d3 25 ♕f3 ♜f8 26 ♗f5 ♜fg8 27 ♜xh5 ♗7e5+ 28 fe fe 29 ♖e3 ♗f4 30 ♜xh7+ 1-0.

In the 1950s and the early mid-sixties the gambit was hardly ever played. Then, on March 19th 1967, everything changed. The emigre Hungarian Grandmaster Pal

Benko played the following game in the first round of the Sarajevo international tournament and 1 d4 was never quite the same again.

Vukić-Benko, Sarajevo 1967: 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 ba ♗xa6 6 ♗c3 d6 7 ♗f3 g6 8 g3 ♗g7 9 ♗g2 0-0 10 0-0 ♗bd7 11 ♖c2 ♖b6 12 ♜d1 ♜fb8 13 ♜b1 ♗e8 14 ♗g5 ♖d8 15 ♗fl h6 16 ♗d2 ♗c7 17 b3 ♗b6 18 e4 ♗xf1 19 ♕xf1 ♖d7 20 ♜el ♕h7 21 ♕g2 e6 22 de ♗xe6 23 ♗c2 d5 24 ♗f4 de 25 ♜xe4 ♗d4 26 ♗xd4 cd 27 a4? (but Black was threatening 27 ... ♜c8 28 ♖b2 d3, and if 27 ♗d3 ♜c8 followed by 28 ... ♖b5 ♢ or 28 ... ♖c6 29 f3 ♖c2 ♢) 27 ... ♖b7! 28 f3 ♗xa4 29 ♜bel ♖xb3 30 ♖xb3 ♜xb3 31 ♜e7 ♜b2 32 ♜le2 ♗c3 33 ♗xc3 dc 34 ♜xf7 ♜aa2 35 ♕fl g5 36 ♜xg7+ ♕xg7 37 ♗e6+ ♕f6 38 ♗d4 ♜xe2 39 ♗xe2 ♜a1+ 0-1.

Suddenly the Benko Gambit was very much in vogue. Benko himself played it at almost every available opportunity. A number of other Grandmasters adopted the gambit, notably Browne, Damjanović, Georgadze, Gheorghiu and Vasyukov, and within five years it had become the top scoring weapon against 1 d4. Benko popularized the gambit with his many articles in *Chess Life and Review* and with his book *The Benko Gambit*, published at the beginning of 1973, and at the

time of writing (July 1977) he has done so much to enrich our knowledge and understanding of the gambit that some East European publications have even begun to name the gambit after him rather than the river Volga!

With the sudden increase in popularity of the gambit there came an increase in the number of systems with which players of the white pieces tried to refute it. The first system to gain popularity was that discussed in part one of this volume (pages 23–45) in which White plays an early e4, allowing . . . ♖×f1, and then puts his king on g2 or h2 before playing to consolidate his ♖-side. When this system was found to offer Black ample counterplay it became the

done thing to refrain from e4, thereby depriving Black of any play along the a6–f1 diagonal (and the use of the d3 square in particular). Instead White would play g3 and then develop his bishop on g2 or h3.

More recently, an entirely different approach has been tried, whereby White does not capture on a6 but plays for quick development (4 cb a6 5 ♖c3 ab 6 e4 b4 7 ♖b5, followed by 8 ♖f3 or 8 ♖f4). The idea behind this plan is to crush Black in the centre with an early e5 before he has had time to complete his development, but so far, thanks partly to an ingenious resource discovered by Benko, there is little to suggest that this modern approach represents the refutation of the Benko Gambit.

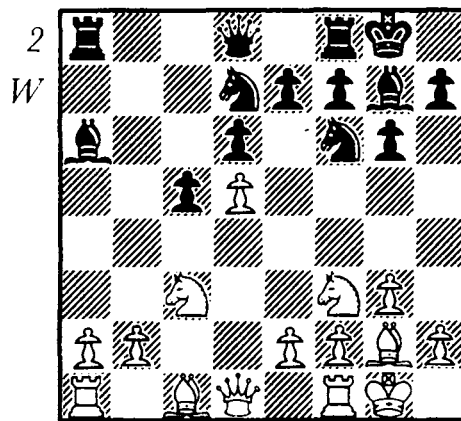
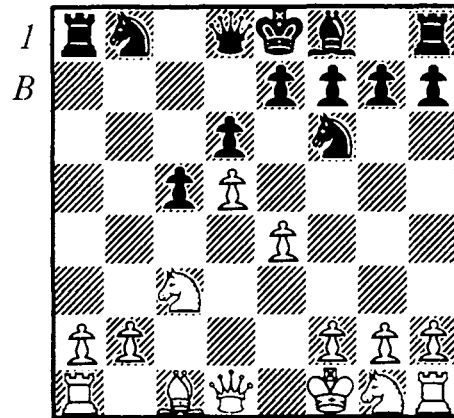
2 Conceptual Introduction

The Benko Gambit represents the most important contribution to opening theory for three decades or more. Here is a defence (counterattack) which gives Black the initiative from the very beginning of the game and in which this initiative frequently lasts right through the middle game and well into the ending. Black has four lines of attack in the Benko Gambit: the a- and b-files and the h8-a1 and a6-f1 diagonals. White has no equivalent attacking possibility—his sole aggressive motif is the advance of the e-pawn to e5, but this advance is not easy to achieve and even when it is played it is often of limited or no effect.

In return for all this Black sacrifices only one pawn, and a wing pawn at that. Not even a Slater or a Rothschild could ask for a better return on such a small investment.

The basic positions in the two main variations of the Benko Gambit are shown in the following

diagrams. These positions will help the reader in his understanding of the principal motifs and ideas in the gambit.



From these two positions we can see the role that will be played by

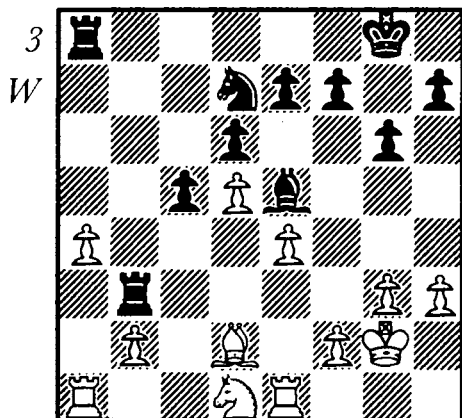
each of Black's pieces as the game develops. His rooks will put pressure on White's Q-side pawns from a8 and b8, occasionally doubling on one of these files to intensify the pressure against one of the pawns. Black's g7 bishop augments the pressure against White's b2 pawn, while his a6 bishop exerts pressure along the diagonal to f1. If the light squared bishops are exchanged (as was the case in diagram 1) Black will often renew his pressure along the a6–f1 diagonal by bringing his queen to a6 via a5, b6 or c8.

Black's knights can serve two distinct functions. They can act as aggressors, adding to the pressure on White's Q-side from c4 or, when White's d-pawn has moved, from d3; or they can be employed to exchange off White's knights by manoeuvres such as . . . ♖g4–e5 (to exchange off the f3 knight) and . . . ♖a6–c7–b5 (or . . . ♖e8–c7–b5 or . . . ♖d7–b6–a4) to exchange off the c3 knight. The reader might at first be surprised to learn that the exchange of pieces is one of Black's aims in the Benko Gambit but it is the great paradox of this gambit that even though he is a pawn down Black's position usually improves with each exchange of pieces and that Benko Gambit endings (especially major piece endings) tend to favour Black.

Black's queen also has an aggressive role in the Benko Gambit sometimes adding to the pressure on White's Q-side pawns from a5 or b6 and sometimes creating play on the a6–f1 diagonal after the exchange of light squared bishops. Nevertheless, Black should not be afraid to exchange queens because even in their absence his Q-side pressure is normally of a lasting nature.

With so many dynamic possibilities at his disposal Black has by far the easier position to play. White, on the other hand, must be extremely careful lest the pressure on one of his Q-side pawns should become overwhelming, and in particular White should watch out for combinative possibilities on the b2 square. The most sensible way for White to play against the Benko Gambit is to try to consolidate his position and to set up pawns on b3 and a4 (if possible with a knight on b5 as well). If he can create and maintain this structure without succumbing to a tactical stroke such as . . . c4, White will have excellent winning prospects in the ending.

Before we enter into a detailed discussion of the most typical Benko Gambit motifs, let us first confirm the endgame paradox by examining two endings in which Black is a pawn down but with the better chances.

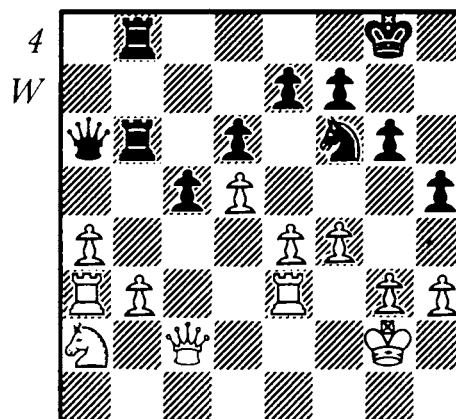


Kuzmin-Georgadze

½-final 40th USSR Ch 1972

Black is about to win back his sacrificed pawn because he not only attacks b2 but also threatens ... ♖b6 followed by ... ♖c4. So White tries to simplify. **20 ♖e3 ♗×b2 21 ♖a2** If 21 ♖×b3 ♗×a1 22 ♖b7 (or 22 a5 ♔f8) 22 ... ♗f6 23 ♖×e7 ♖×a4, and Black's passed c-pawn will eventually prove decisive. **21 ... ♖×e3 22 ♗×e3 ♗d4 23 ♗c4 f5!** The thematic break in endings with this particular pawn structure (white pawns on e4 and d5 v black pawns on c5, d6 and e7). Either White exchanges on f5 leaving himself with an isolated d-pawn or White plays f3 allowing ... f×e4, f×e4 and Black will eventually pick up the e4 pawn. In endings of this type White's central pawn structure will always collapse in the face of the march of Black's king to e5. **24 efgf 25 ♗g5 ♔f7 26 f4 ♖b8! 27 ♗a5** Or 27 a5 ♖b4 28 a6 ♖×c4 29 a7 ♗b6 ± ± **27 ... h6!! 28 ♗×h6** If

28 ♗h4 ♗f6 29 ♗c6 ♖a8, and after the exchange of bishops Black will go for White's d5 pawn. **28 ... ♗b6 29 ♗c6 ♖a8 30 g4 ♗×d5 31 ♗×d4 cd 32 a5 ♔g6 33 ♗g5 e5! 34 a6 ♗e3+! 35 ♔g1 e4 36 ♗e7 d3 37 ♗×d6 ♗c2! 38 gf+ ♔f7 39 ♖b2 d2 40 ♖b7+ ♔g8 0-1.** White's a-pawn could always be stopped.



Mecking-Szabó, Buenos Aires 1970
31 a5 This pawn soon becomes indefensible. **31 ... ♖b5 32 ♔c4 ♖a8 33 b4 ♖×a5 34 ♔×a6 ♖5×a6 35 ♖×a6 ♖×a6 36 ♖e2 ♗×e4! 37 bc dc 38 ♖×e4 ♖×a2+ 39 ♔f3 ♖a3+ 40 ♔g2 ♔f8** Black is now a pawn up and the win is not difficult. **41 ♖c4 ♖a5 42 ♔f3 ♔e8 43 f5 gf 44 ♔f4 ♔d7 45 ♔×f5 ♔d6** The white d-pawn is ripe. **46 ♖h4 ♔×d5 47 ♖×h5 ♔d4 48 ♔g4 ♖a6 49 ♖h8 c4 50 ♔f3 ♔d3 0-1.** The c-pawn cannot be stopped.

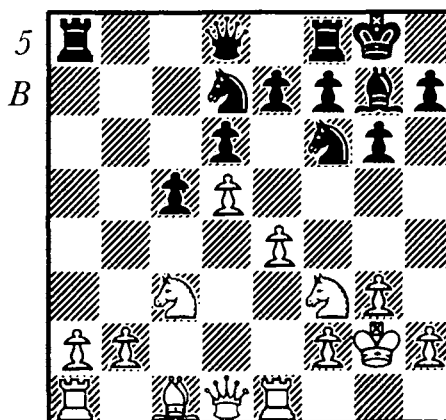
Black's advantage in Benko Gambit endings lies partly in the

fact that once White's b-pawn has disappeared Black has a protected passed c-pawn, and partly in the ease with which his king can attack White's central pawn mass by marching to e5. With the major pieces on the board Black cannot afford to put his king in jeopardy but despite this he usually has the better endgame prospects, as for example in the Gligorić–Browne game on page 32.

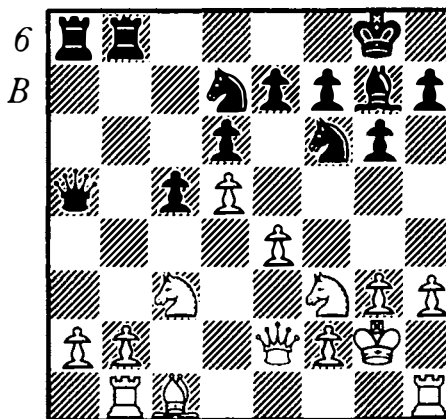
Now that we have seen how Black should play a typical Benko Gambit ending we can take a detailed look at the most frequently recurring motifs in the middle game. Remember that Black's basic strategy is to build up pressure on White's a- and b-pawns, to prevent White from establishing a safe structure on b3 and a4, to exchange pieces whenever possible, and finally to reach a favourable endgame. White's basic strategy is to consolidate his extra pawn by supporting and strengthening his Q-side, establishing pawns on a4 and b3, limiting Black's counterplay, and eventually to neutralize Black's initiative and emerge with a safe extra pawn.

One of Black's easiest tasks to accomplish is the exchange of knights. (5)

1... ♖g4 ♗h3 This move is often played in response to ... ♖g4 but it is not always logical. After all, since



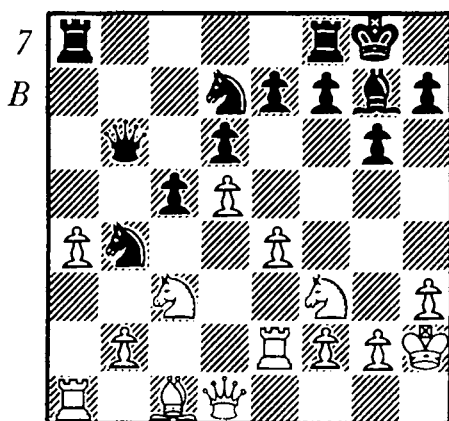
Black's knight is aiming to move to e5 in any event, why waste a tempo to encourage it on its way? **2...** ♖ge5 **3** ♖×e5 If the f3 knight retreats White has a very passive position. **3...** ♖×e5 **4** f4 ♖d7 **5** ♗c2 ♗b6 **6** ♗d2 c4 Black has succeeded in exchanging a pair of knights and he now has the more dynamic position. ... ♖c5 and ... ♖d3 will soon be possible.



1... ♖b6 Heading for a4. **2** ♗d2 ♖a4 **3** ♖×a4 If 3 a3 ♖×c3 4 ♗×c3 ♗a4, attacking the e-pawn and keeping the move ... ♗b3 in reserve. **3...** ♗×a4. White cannot defend both the a2 pawn and the e4 pawn and so his position will soon

collapse. This example is rather dramatic but it does demonstrate the importance of White's c3 knight and how difficult life can become for White once this knight has been exchanged off.

We have already stated that knights can also adopt an aggressive role in the Benko Gambit. The ideal square for a black knight is d3 (once White's e-pawn has advanced) and so Black must first support the d3 square either by . . . c4 or by putting his queen or bishop on the a6–f1 diagonal. Once Black establishes a knight on d3 he will usually have at least a slight advantage.

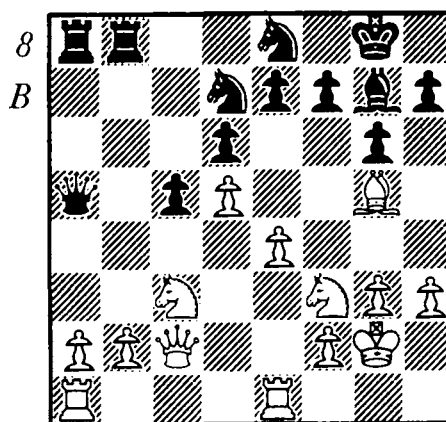


Trapl-Knaak, Sombor 1972

15 . . . c4 16 ♗e3 ♘c5 17 ♘d2 ♗bd3 Already White is quite lost. **18 ♘×c4 ♖b4 19 ♗×c5 ♖×c4 20 ♗a3** Forced, otherwise **20 . . . ♘×b2** is crushing. **20 . . . f5!** Now that White's K-side has become weakened by lack of protection Black opens up another front. **21 ef ♖×f5 22 ♖c2 ♗e5+ 23 g3 ♘×f2**

24 ♖×e5 de 25 ♗×e7 ♘d3 26 b3 ♖d4 27 ♘d1 ♘e1 28 ♖c4 and 0-1 (28 . . . ♖d2+).

We saw in the above example how a knight on d3 introduces all sorts of tactical possibilities based on capturing the b2-pawn. In fact most of the combinations played in the Benko Gambit begin with the capture on b2. Here is one example—there are dozens of others which equally well illustrate the vulnerability of b2.

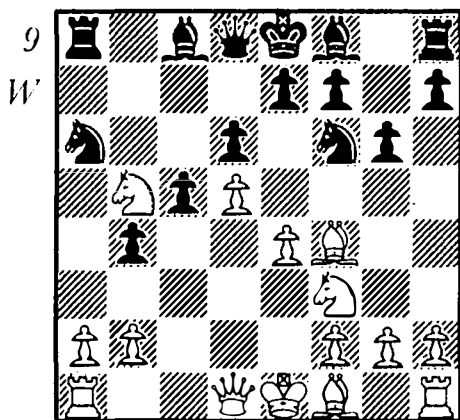


Vaiser-Georgadze, USSR Young Masters Ch 1973

15 . . . ♖×b2! 16 ♖×b2 ♗×c3 17 ♖b7 ♖a7!! Black attacks so many pieces that he is assured of recouping all his investment. **18 ♖×a7** If **18 ♖c6 f6 19 ♖ab1 ♗×e1 20 ♖b7 ♖a4 21 ♖×d7 ♖×c6 22 dc ♗a5!** and the white c-pawn will soon fall. **18 . . . ♖×a7 19 ♘d2** If **19 ♗×e7 ♗×a1 20 ♖×a1 f6** and the white bishop has no way to escape. **19 . . . ♗×a1 20 ♖×a1 f6.** The combination is

over and Black has won back the pawn. Black now has all the usual advantages of the typical Benko Gambit ending (protected passed c-pawn, more active pieces, etc.) and the game was won by Black after a lengthy and stubborn defence by his opponent.

By now I hope that I have convinced the reader that the Benko Gambit is a most potent and dynamic weapon against 1 d4, but just in case I have done my job too well and persuaded someone that 1 d4 loses out of hand, I shall now give some examples of a successful strategy being employed by White (or rather what happens when Black defends badly).

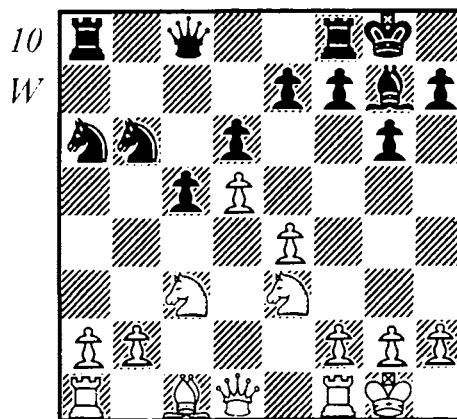


This position stems from one of the most recent weapons to appear in the anti-Benko system in which White strives for the advance e5 from the earliest stages of the game. **10 e5** ♖h5 If 10 ... d6 11 ♗xe5 (threatening 12 ♗xf6 and 13 d6) 11 ... ♗g7 12 ♗c4 with an extremely active game for White.

11 ♖a4 ♗d7 Or 11 ... ♖d7? 12 ♗xd6+! ed 13 ♗b5, winning the queen. **12 e6! fe 13 de ♗c6** If 13 ... ♗xf4 14 ed+ ♖xd7 15 ♗xd6+ etc. winning, as in the previous note. Also hopeless is 13 ... ♗xe6 14 ♗c7++ and 15 ♗xa8. **14 ♗xd6+! ♖xd6 15 ♗b5! ♖xe6+** Or 15 ... ♗b8 16 ♖xa8 ♗xf4 17 ♗xc6+ **16 ♗e5 ♗xb5 17 ♖xb5+ ♖d7 18 ♖xd7+ ♗xd7 19 ♗xh8** White has a decisive material advantage.

The moral of this tale is 'beware of tactical possibilities beginning with the advance e5.'

It is always important in a gambit opening for the side that sacrifices material to play actively. In the Benko Gambit the usual punishment for neglecting this rule is the setting up of White pawns on b3 and a4, possibly with a knight at b5 for good measure. This formation normally puts paid to Black's counterplay and allows White to realise his material advantage.

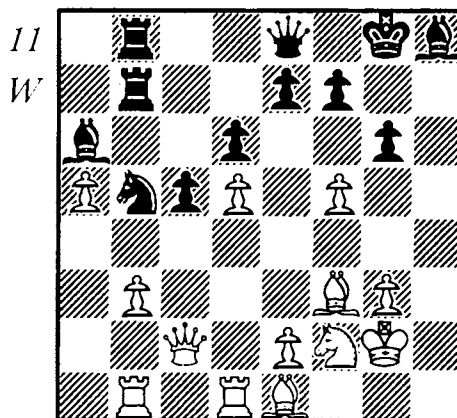


Doroshkevich–Georgadze, USSR
1972

Here black has played too tamely, in particular his queen is not at all active. **14 a4** ♖b4 **15** ♖a3 ♗a6 **16** ♖b5 ♗b7 **17 b3** In just four moves Black's Q-side counterattack has been neutralized. **17 . . . f5** **18 ef gf** **19** ♗h5 ♗d7 **20** ♖d1 **f4** **21** ♖c4 ♖×c4 **22 bc** ♖c2 **23** ♖h3 ♗f5 **24** ♗e2 White is still a pawn up and he has the more active position. Black was unable to find sufficient counterplay and lost.




Sometimes when White plays the move b3 he can fall victim to the counter . . . c4. The point is that if White exchanges pawns himself or allows Black to exchange on b3 there will be an isolated Q-side pawn which needs protection for the remainder of the game and Black will have two open files on the Q-side along which he can operate. This idea of . . . c4 is, however, double-edged, since if White can meet . . . c4 with b4 (now that he has already played b3 White need not fear the *en passant* capture) he will have two connected passed pawns. This question of whether or not . . . c4 can be played with success after b3 by White arises quite often in the Benko Gambit. The reader must be prepared to work out the pros and cons of . . . c4 for himself, depending on the circumstances.

Finally, let me remind you that in the Benko Gambit Black gives up a pawn. If his counterplay proves ineffective he will find himself playing an ending in which White's passed a-pawn is the decisive factor.






Hasin–Berezin, ½-final Moscow Ch
1962

White's advanced a-pawn ties Black's light squared bishop to the role of blockader. This pawn offers so much potential that White can afford to give up the exchange in order to destroy the final vestiges of Black's counterplay. **32 fg!** ♖a3 **33 gf+** ♗×f7 **34** ♗e4 ♖×b1 **35** ♖g4! ♖g7 **36** ♖×b1 ♖×b3 **37** ♖×b3 ♖×b3 **38** ♖d2 ♗f8 **39** ♖h6 ♗f6 **40** ♗h7 ♗e8 **41** ♖g8 ♗f8 **42** ♖g5 ♖b7 **43** ♖h5+ ♗d8 **44** ♗g6 ♖e5 **45** ♖h6 ♖g7 **46** ♗×g7 ♗×g7 **47** ♖×g7 **c4** **48** ♗f2 **e5** **49 de** ♖×g7 **50 e7+** ♖×e7 **51** ♖×e7 ♗×e7 The complications are over and White still has his extra passed pawn. **52** ♗e3 **c3** **53** ♖g6 ♖b5 **54** ♖d3 ♖a4 **55** a6

d7 56 a7 1–0. If 56 . . . c6 57 b5!

The Golden Rules of the Benko Gambit

- 1) Endings tend to favour Black.
- 2) When Black can play . . . a6)×f1 he should do so immediately in order to prevent or slow down White's castling process.
- 3) When Black plays . . . g4 White should think twice about playing h3—after all, the g4 knight wants to go to e5 in any event.
- 4) Black's queen is usually best placed on a5.

5) Black often does best to play . . . bd7–b6 (–c4) before developing his queen.

6) When White has played b3, Black should ensure that . . . c4 can not be met by b4.

7) White should try to establish pawns on b3 and a4 and a knight on b5.

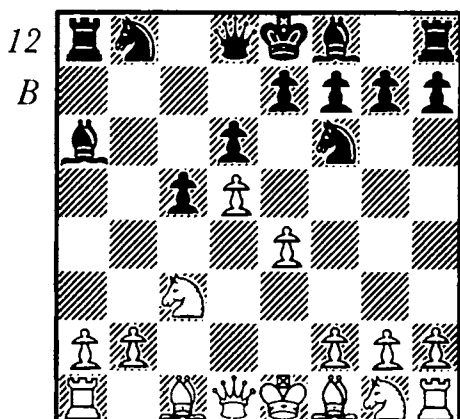
8) If Black can get a knight to d3 his game will 'play itself'.

9) Both sides should be on the alert for combinations on b2.

10) If Black's counterplay is mishandled White's passed a–pawn will win the ending.

3 Castling by Hand—Introduction and Early Divergences

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙×a6 6 ♞c3 d6 7 e4 (12)



This position is the starting point for the variations that make up chapters 4–8. After the almost inevitable exchange of bishops (7... ♙×f1 8 ♞×f1) Black hurries to complete his development (... g6, ... ♙g7, ... 0–0 and ... ♞bd7) while White first puts his king on a less awkward square (g3 and ♙g2; or h3, ♞f3, ♙g1 and ♙h2). The stage is then set for the traditional Benko Gambit struggle in which Black launches an attack along the a- and b-files.

In this chapter we shall examine

only those variations that diverge from the sequence 7... ♙×f1 8 ♞×f1 g6 9 g3 (or 9 h3 ♙g7 10 ♞f3 0–0 11 ♙g1) 9... ♙g7 10 ♙g2 0–0 11 ♞f3 ♞bd7.

7... ♙×f1

Natural and best. 7... g6 allows White to castle normally: 8 ♙×a6 (8 ♙e2 0–0 transposes to variation A in chapter 19) 8... ♞×a6 9 ♞f3 (9 ♞ge2 ♙g7 10 0–0 0–0 11 f3 ♙d7 12 ♙e3 ♞fb8 13 ♙d2 ♞c7 14 ♞ac1 ♞b4 15 ♞c2 ♞ab8∞ Božić-Udovčić, Belgrade 1948/49) 9... ♙g7 10 0–0 and now:

a) 10... ♞d7 11 ♙f4 0–0 12 ♙e2 ♙c7 13 ♞fc1 ♞ab8 14 ♞ab1, see Szabó-Lundin in chapter 1, page 11.

b) 10... 0–0 11 ♞d2 ♞d7 12 ♞c4 ♞b6 13 ♞e3 transposes to the O’Kelly-Toran game in chapter 15, page 82.

8 ♞×f1 g6

We now consider:

A 9 ♞ge2

B 9 g4?!

C 9 f3?! and

D 9 g3 (the main line)

9 f4 will transpose to variation D after 9... ♖g7 10 ♜f3 0-0 11 g3 ♜bd7 (or... ♜a6) 12 ♝g2.

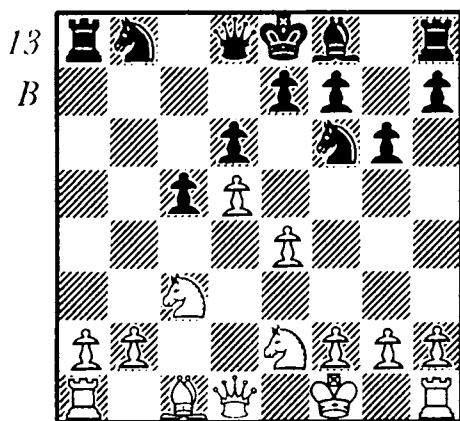
9 h3 is covered in chapter 8.

9 ♜f3 ♗a5 10 ♜d2 ♖g7 transposes to chapter 15, variation A2 (note to Black's 10th move), while 10 g3 (instead of 10 ♜d2) transposes to chapters 3–7 (variations in which Black plays... ♗a5).

9 ♖f4 works only against slow play by Black, e.g. 9... ♖g7 10 ♗d2 ♗b6 11 ♜b1 ♜g4 12 h3 ♜e5 13 ♖h6 0-0 14 ♖xg7 ♜xg7 15 ♜ge2 ♜bd7 16 b3± Möhring–Grünberg, East German Ch 1973. But if Black reacts at once with 9... ♗b6! 10 ♗d2 ♗b4 11 f3 ♜bd7, White's position is already under pressure.

A

9 ♜ge2 (13)



This move should not cause Black any serious problems because it has too many disadvantages. On

e2 the knight does not support the advance e5 and it gets in the way of the manoeuvre ♜el–e2. Also, from e2 it is difficult for the knight to reach a useful Q-side square—in particular it can not get to d2 to control c4.

One of the ideas behind 9 ♜ge2 is the support of the c3 knight. In particular, if Black plays to exchange this knight by... ♜a6–c7–b5 (or... ♜e8–c7–b5) then White will be able to recapture on c3 with the knight.

9... ♖g7

10 h3

a) **10 g3** transposes to variation D.

b) **10 ♜f4** 0-0 11 g4?! is much too risky. After all, White's king is already less well placed than that of his opponent so why should he be able to afford the advance of his K-side pawns? 11... ♜a6 (Benko suggests 11... h6!? 12 h4 ♜fd7 as a possible alternative, so as to meet h5 with... g5 and g5 with... h5.) 12 h4 ♗c8! (A dual purpose move, attacking the g-pawn and preparing for an eventual... ♗a6. Formanek–Browne, Atlantic Open 1970, went instead 12... ♗a5 13 h5 ♜fb8 14 hg hg 15 g5 ♜d7 16 ♗g4 ♜e5 17 ♗h3 ♜b4 18 ♝g2 ♗a6 19 ♗h7+ ♜f8 20 ♜h3 ♜c2±) 13 g5 ♜d7 14 h5 ♜e5 15 hg hg 16 f3 ♜b4 17 ♝g2 ♗a6 18 a3?! (18 ♗e1 ♜fb8 19 ♗h4 ♜bd3 20 ♜b1 ♜xf4+ 21 ♖xf4 ♜d3±)

18 ... ♖fb8 19 ♗ce2 ♗bd3 20
 ♖b1 ♗xc1 21 ♜xc1 ♖b3! ♢
 Ulrich–Matzner, Santa Monica
 1974.

10 ... 0–0

11 ♖g1 ♜b6

Better is Enklaar's suggestion 11
 ... ♜a5, e.g. 12 ♖b1 ♗bd7 13
 ♗c3 ♖fb8 14 ♜c2 ♗e5 15 b3 ♜a6
 16 ♖h2 ♜d3 17 ♜xd3 ♗xd3∞
 Bilyap–Palatnik, Albena 1975; or
 12 ♖h2 ♗bd7 13 ♜c2 ♖fb8 14
 ♖b1 ♗e5?! (correct is ...
 ♗e8–c7–b5) 15 b3 c4 16 ♗e3 cb 17
 ab ♖c8 18 ♖hc1 ♜b4 19 f3 ♖c7
 20 ♜d2 ♗fd7 21 ♗a4 ♜xd2 22
 ♗xd2± Kuijpers–Dueball,
 Netherlands–West Germany
 match 1971.

On b6 the black queen prevents
 the manoeuvre ... ♗bd7–b6.

12 ♖b1 ♗a6

13 ♗e3 ♖fb8

If 13 ... ♗c7 14 b4!

14 ♖h2 ♗d7

15 ♜d2

Also good is 15 b3, e.g.:

a) 15 ... ♜a5 16 ♜d2 c4 17
 ♗d4±.

b) 15 ... ♗b4 16 a4 ♜a6 17 ♜d2
 c4 18 ♗b5±.

15 ... ♜a5

15 ... ♗c7 is still met by 16 b4!

16 ♗g5! ♜c7

If 16 ... ♖f8 or 16 ... ♗f6, 17
 ♗h6; or if 16 ... ♜d8 17 f4
 ♗c7 18 e5, when 18 ... de?! is met
 by 19 d6!

17 ♖hc1?

Better is 17 b3± or 17 f4±.

17 ... c4!

18 ♗e3

18 f4 is still the best move,
 threatening e5.

18 ... ♗b4

19 ♗d4

So far we have been following the
 game Ree–Enklaar, Dutch Ch
 1972.

19 ... ♗e5

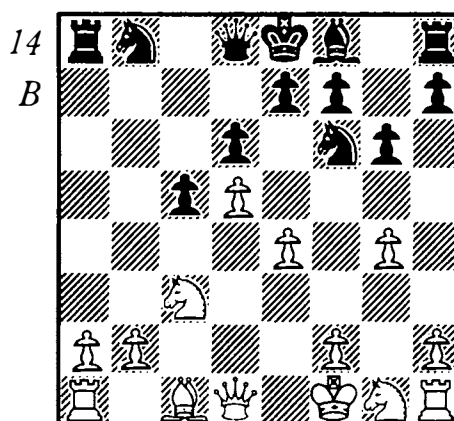
20 a3 ♗d3

21 ♖c2 ♗c5

Black has good counterplay for
 the pawn.

B

9 g4?! (14)



This is no less risky than 9 ♗ge2
 ♗g7 10 g4?!

9 ... ♗g7

10 f3

a) 10 ♗ge2 transposes to variation
 A.

b) 10 ♖g2 0–0 11 h3 (11 h4 h5) 11
 ... e6! (the natural reaction to a
 dubious flank attack–counterattack

in the centre) 12 d4 e5! ♖e8 14 ed ♗xd6 15 ♖e2 ♖d7 16 f4 ♗c6 17 ♗f3 ♗d4 (also possible is 17... ♗ae8, intending ... e5) 18 ♗xd4 cd 19 ♗e4 ♖c6 ♭ Avram-Benko, US Open Ch 1968.

10 ... 0-0

11 ♗ge2

Now we have a form of variation A in which White's 'attack' is one move behind because he has spent a tempo on f3. So Black has time for

11 ... e6!

12 ♖g2 ed

13 ♗xd5 ♗c6

14 ♗ec3

14 ♗g5?? ♗xd5 15. ♗xd8 ♗e3+ ♭ ♭.

14 ... ♗xd5

15 cd

15 ♗xd5 f5! ♭.

15 ... ♗b4!

Intending to invade d3 after ... c4.

16 h4 f5

17 g5?

Better is 17 ♗g5 ♭.

17 ... c4

18 a3 ♗d3

19 ♖b1 ♖b6

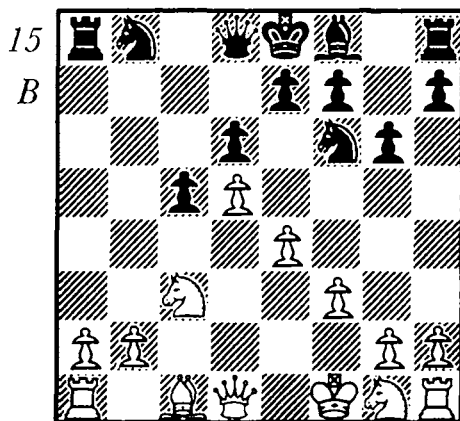
20 ♖c2 ♖fe8

0-1

Visier-Benko, Malaga 1969. If 21 ♖d2 ♗xc3 ♭ ♭ or 21 ♖g3 ♗e5+ 22 ♖g2 ♗xc3 23 bc ♖c5 ♭ ♭.

C

9 f3?! (15)



This leads to positions similar to those in variation B. White's K-side is rather shaky and so ... e6 is often a possibility.

9 ... ♗g7

10 ♗ge2 0-0

11 ♗e3

11 g4 e6 transposes to variation B.

11 ... ♗bd7

12 ♖f2 ♗e5

13 g4?

Thematic but bad.

13 ... ♖a5

13... e6 is a perfectly acceptable alternative.

14 ♖c2 ♖fb8

15 ♖ab1 ♗c4 16 ♗c1 ♗e8 17 a4 ♖b6 18 ♗b5 ♗e5 19 ♗e3 ♖a5 20 b3 c4 ♭ Kchouk-Fuller, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

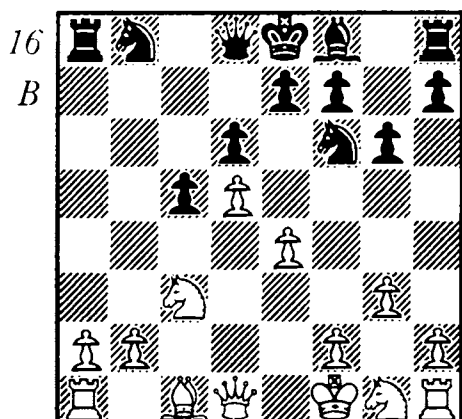
D

9 g3 (16)

This is the main line which usually leads to the variations discussed in chapters 4-7.

9 ... ♗g7

10 ♖g2 0-0



11 ♖f3 (17)

a) **11 ♖ge2** ♗b6 12 ♜b1 ♖a6 (this is better than 12 ... ♖bd7 because the knight is needed on c7 from where it can support the central break ... e6) 13 b3 ♖c7 14 f3 e6! 15 de?! fe 16 ♕e3 ♗c6 ♖ Gross-Benko, US Open Ch 1968.

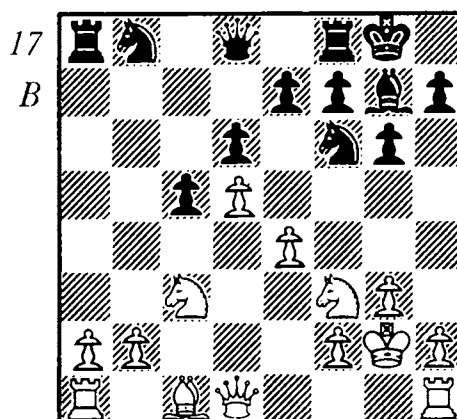
b) **11 f4** loosens the K-side too much, and now:

b1) **11 ... e6** 12 de fe 13 ♖f3 ♖c6 14 ♜el± Gerusel-Schaufelberger, Luxembourg 1971.

b2) **11 ... ♖bd7** 12 ♖f3 ♗b8 (or 12 ... ♗b6 13 ♜el ♗b7 and ... ♖b6) 13 ♜el ♖e8 14 ♗c2 ♖c7 15 ♕d2 ♗b7, with strong pressure along the long diagonal. Korelov-Mozhalov, Minsk 1972 continued 16 b3 ♖b5 17 ♖xb5 ♕xa1 18 ♖xd6 ♗a6 19 ♜xa1 ♗e2+ 20 ♖gl ed 21 ♜fl ♖f6 ♖.

b3) **11 ... ♖a6!** 12 ♖f3 ♗b6 13 e5!? (safer is 13 ♜el ♖b4 14 ♜e2 ♗a6 15 a4 ♜fb8 16 ♜a3-intending ♖b5 and ♖d2-c4-16 ... ♗c4! 17 ♖d2 ♗d3!= Malich-Ciocâltea,

Vrnjačka Banja 1972; but maybe an improvement for Black is 13 ... ♖c7 instead of 13 ... ♖b4, and if 14 ♗d3 ♗a6 ♖ Antoshin-Palatnik, USSR 1974) 13 ... ♖e8! 14 ♗e2 ♖ec7 15 ♜d1 ♖b4 16 ♕e3 ♗b7 17 ♕f2 (17 ♗d2 c4!) 17 ... de 18 fe (18 a3 e4!) 18 ... ♖bxd5 19 ♕xc5 (19 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 20 ♕xc5 ♜fc8! 21 ♕d4 ♖b4 22 a3 ♖c2 ♖) 19 ... ♜fc8! (threatening 20 ... ♖xc3 21 bc ♖d5!) 20 ♖e4? ♖e6! (threatening both ... ♖f4+ and ... ♖xc5) 21 ♜xd5 (21 ♕e3 ♜c2! 22 ♜d2 ♗xb2! 23 ♜ad1 ♜xa2!) 21 ... ♗xd5 22 ♕xe7 ♜xa2 23 ♜el (23 ♖c3 ♜xc3 ♖; 23 ♜d1 ♜xb2! ♖) 23 ... ♜a4! 24 ♖gl ♖d4 25 ♗d1 ♜a1!! 0-1 (26 ♗xa1 ♖xf3+ 27 ♖fl ♖xe1 28 ♗xe1 ♗xe5 ♖). Voiculescu-Ghinda, Bucharest 1973. A delightful game.



11 ... ♖bd7 (18)

a) **11 ... ♖a6** and now:

a1) **12 ♖d2** ♗c7 13 ♖c4 ♜fb8 14

♖e1 ♕d7 15 a3?! ♕e5 = Saidy-Martens, Leningrad 1960.

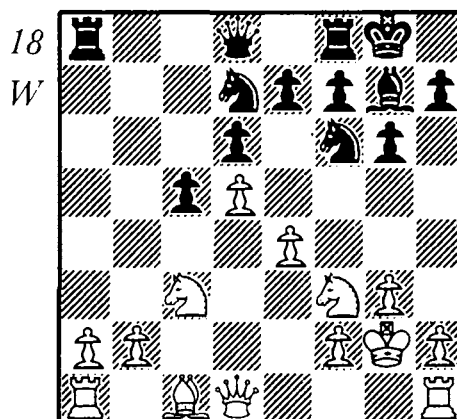
a2) **12** ♖e1 ♜d7 13 ♖e2 ♜c7 14 ♜g5 ♜b6 15 ♖c1 ♖fb8 16 ♜f4 ♜b7 17 c5?! de 18 ♜×e5 ♜×e5 19 ♖×c5 ♜c4 20 ♖e4 ♜d6 ♢
Knaak–Stanciu, Bucharest 1973.

a3) **12** ♖e2 ♜b6 13 ♙f4 ♜fb8 14 ♜ab1 ♜c7 15 ♜he1 ♜b5 16 ♜xb5 ♜xb5 17 b3± Camâra-Hook, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

b) **11 ... ♖fd7** 12 ♖e1 ♗b6 (12 ... ♗c7 13 ♖e2 ♖a6 transposes to variation a2 above) 13 ♖c2 ♖a6 14 ♖g5 (14 ♖f4 ♖fb8 15 ♖c1 ♖c7 16 ♖cc2 ♖xc3 17 bc f6 18 h4 ♖b5 19 ♖c1 ♖a3 = Gligorić-Diez del Corral, Siegen Olympiad 1970) 14 ... h6 15 ♖c3 (15 ♖xc7 ♖fe8 16 ♖h4 g5 17 ♖xg5∞ or 17 ♖xg5∞) 15 ... ♖fb8 16 ♖c1 ♗h7 17 ♗d2 ♖c7 18 h4! ♖b5 19 ♖xb5 ♗xb5 20 b3± Kane-Vogt, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

c) **11** ... ♖b6 12 h3 ♘a6 (12 ... ♘bd7 transposes to chapter 6) 13 ♖c2 ♘c7 14 ♜d1 ♖a6!? 15 ♖xa6

♖xa6 16 ♜f4 ♖b8 17 ♖d2 ♜d7
 18 ♖c1 (Gligorić–Palatnik,
 Yugoslavia–USSR match 1974)
 and now 18 ... ♖b4 19 ♖c2 c4
 followed by ... ♜c5–d3–Benko.



We have now reached the main parting of the ways.

For 12 ♖c1 see chapter 4

For 12 ♙e2 see chapter 5

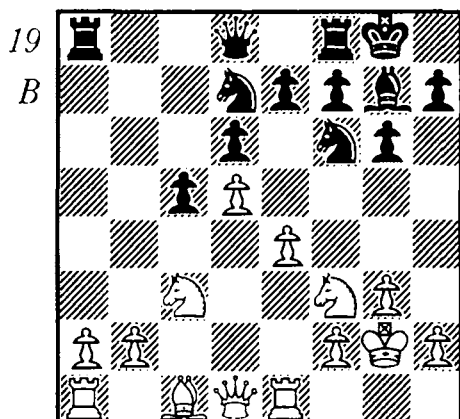
For 12 h3 sce chapter 6

For 12 ♖d2 see chapter 7

12 ♯c2 will normally transpose to one or other of these chapters, e.g. 12 ... ♯c7 13 ♭e1 or 12 ... ♯b6 13 ♭e1.

4 12 ♖e1

1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♘xa6 6 ♟c3 d6 7 e4 ♘xf1 8
♙xf1 g6 9 g3 ♘g7 10 ♙g2 0-0 11
♟f3 ♟bd7 12 ♖e1 (19)



The main line. White completes the process of castling by hand, supports the e-pawn which hopes to be able to advance to e5 at some time in the future, and prepares ♖e2 (possibly followed by ♖c2) which overprotects White's Q-side pawns on the second rank.

We now examine:

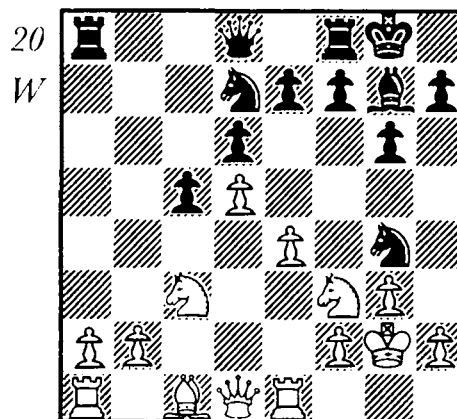
- A 12 ... ♟g4
- B 12 ... ♙b8
- C 12 ... ♙c7
- D 12 ... ♙b6

E 12 ... ♙a5

12 ... ♟b6? is met by 13 e5!±.

A

12 ... ♟g4 (20)



A perfectly logical move, intending ... ♟ge5 to force the exchange of knights and/or the establishing of an outpost on c4 or d3. The point of playing ... ♟g4 before moving the queen is that Black waits to see how White will play before deciding on the best square for the queen.

13 ♖e2

13 h3 ♟ge5 14 ♟xe5 ♟xe5 15
f4 ♟d7 16 ♙c2 ♙b6 17 ♘d2 c4 18
♟d1 ♖fc8 19 ♘c3 ♘xc3 20

♙xc3 ♘c5 21 ♖e2 ♘b3 22 ♖b1
 ♖xa2 Trifunović-Kozomara,
 Yugoslav Ch 1951. When Black
 intends to play ... ♘ge5 in any
 event it is usually a waste of time for
 White to play h3.

13 ... ♙c7

a) 13 ... ♙b6 can transpose to
 variation D by 14 ♙c2.

b) 13 ... ♙a5 14 ♘g5 ♖fe8 15
 ♖c1 (weaker is 15 ♙c2 h6 16 ♘d2
 ♙a6 17 ♖ad1 ♖eb8 18 ♘c1
 ♖b7 = Popov-Vasyukov, Varna
 1971) 15 ... ♖a7 16 ♖cc2 ♘b6 17
 h3 ♘e5 18 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 19
 ♙d3 ♙b4 20 ♘d2 ♖b7 21 b3 c4
 22 bc ♘xc4 23 ♘c1± Bagirov-
 Zilberman, ½-final USSR Ch 1972.

14 ♖c2 ♖fb8

15 h3

What else? If the bishop moves
 Black can play 15 ... ♖xb2! 16
 ♖xb2 ♘xc3±.

15 ... ♘ge5

16 ♘xe5 ♘xe5

17 ♙c2

Holm-Pytel, Polanica Zdroj
 1972.

17 ... c4!∞

B

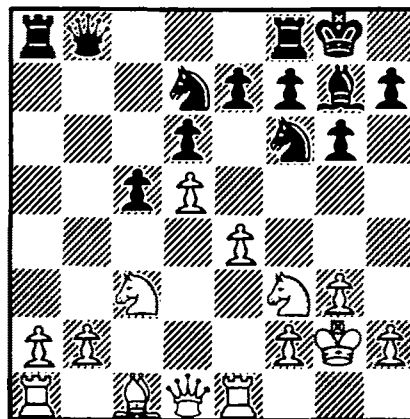
12 ... ♙b8 (21)

An unusual move. If the queen
 wishes to go to b7 it can do so just as
 easily from c7 or b6, so why deprive
 the f8 rook of its best square?

13 ♖e2 ♖a7

Black could try to transpose into
 variation C by 13 ... ♙b7.

21
 W



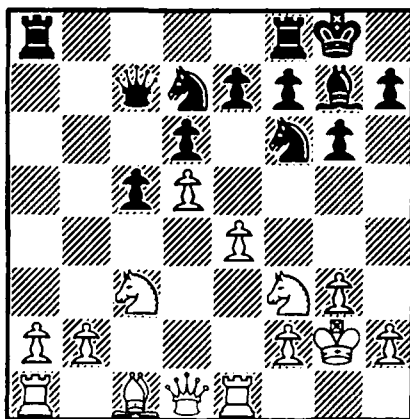
14 ♘g5 h6

15 ♘d2 ♙h7 16 ♙c2 ♙b7 17
 ♖d1 ♖b8 18 ♘c1 ♘e8 19 ♘h4!±
 ♘c7 20 f4 ♘b5 21 ♘xb5 ♙xb5 22
 e5! ♖xa2 23 e6 ♘f8 24 ef±
 Kuzmin-Alburt, USSR 1971.

C

12 ... ♙c7 (22)

22
 W



13 ♖e2 ♖fb8

13 ... ♘g4 transposes to
 variation A.

14 ♖c2 ♙b7

15 h3 ♙a6

The queen could have reached
 this square in two moves instead of
 three, but despite this Black still has
 a good game.

16 ♖g5 h6
 17 ♖e3 ♗e8
 18 ♖d2 ♖h7
 19 ♖d1 ♖b4!

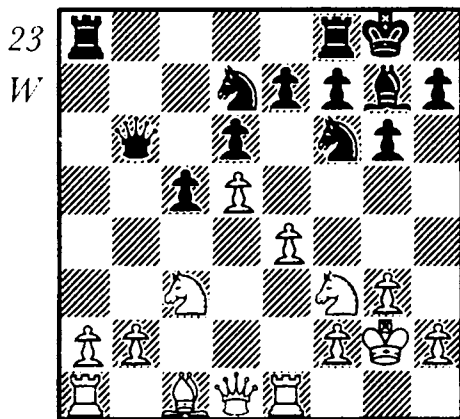
Threatening to return with the e8 knight to f6.

20 a3 ♖b3 ♖

Holm-Toran, Skopje Olympiad 1972, continued 21 ♖c1 ♖ab8 22 ♗d2 ♖3b7 23 f4 (to prevent 23... ♗e5) 23... ♖d3!? 24 ♗db1? (24 ♗b3 ♖a6 25 ♗d2 ♗c7 followed by ... ♗b5 ♖) 24... ♖xc2! 25 ♖xc2 ♖xb2 26 ♖d2 ♖xc2 27 ♖xc2 ♖b3 ♖.

D

12 ... ♖b6 (23)



13 ♖e2

a) **13 e5?! de** 14 ♗×e5 ♗×e5 15 ♖×e5 ♖b7 16 ♖f3 ♖fd8 ♖.

b) **13 ♖c2 ♗g4** (slightly more active is 13... ♖b7 at once, e.g. 14 ♖f4 ♗g4—this position can, of course, arise by transposition from 13... ♗g4 14 ♖f4 ♖b7 – 15 ♖e2 ♖fb8 16 ♖c1 ♖a6 17 h3 ½–½ Šahović-Benko, Vrnjačka Banja

1971) 14 ♖e2 ♖a6 15 ♖d2 (15 ♖g5 ♖fb8 16 ♖d1 ♗ge5 17 ♗×e5 ♖×e5 18 h4!? was played in Gligorić-Kozomara, Belgrade 1961. After 18... f6 19 ♖c1 Black mistakenly played 19... ♖c4? 20 ♖d3 ♖×c3 21 b3! ♖b4 22 ♖×c3±, whereas 19... ♗b6 followed by ... ♗a4 would have equalized.) 15... ♖fb8 16 ♖e1 ♗ge5 17 ♗×e5 ♗×e5 18 ♖d1 c4 19 b3 ♗d3 20 bc ♗b4 21 ♖b3 ♗×d5∞ Holmov-Platonov, ½-final 40th USSR Ch 1972.

c) **13 h3** transposes to chapter 6.

d) **13 ♖e2 ♖fb8** 14 ♗d2 ♖a6! 15 f4 (15 ♗c4 ♖b4) 15... ♗e8 16 ♗f3 ♖×e2 17 ♖×e2 ♗c7 18 a3 ♗b6 19 ♖a2 f5! 20 ef ♗b×d5 21 fg hg 22 ♗×d5 ♗×d5 23 ♗g5 ♖a7 24 ♗e6 (Kristiansen-Popov, Polanica Zdroj 1975) and now 24... ♖f6! 25 g4 c4 26 g5 ♖h8 27 ♖f2 ♗b4 28 ♖a1 ♗d3 ♖.

13 ... ♖fb8

14 h3

a) **14 ♖f4 ♗g4** 15 ♖c1 ♖a5 16 ♖g5 (16 a3!± – Keres) 16... ♖×c3! 17 bc f6 18 ♖f4 ♖a4 19 ♖d3 ♖a6 20 c4? (20 ♖d2! – Keres) 20... ♖b4 = Keres-Pohla, Pärnu 1971.

b) **14 ♖g5 h6!** 15 ♖×f6 ♖×f6 16 ♖c1 (hoping to play b3) 16... c4! 17 ♖cc2 ♖b7 (17... ♗c5 18 e5±) 18 ♖c1 ♖h7?! (18... ♖g7 is more accurate) 19 ♖f4 ♖g7 20 e5

(otherwise Black plays ... ♔a6 and ... ♕c5-d3) 20 ... ♕×e5 21 ♕×e5 ♖×e5 22 ♔×c4 ♖c7 23 ♔d3 ♔a6 = 24 ♔×a6 ♖×a6 25 ♖e3?? (Gligorić-Browne, Rovinj/Zagreb 1970) and now 25 ... ♖×a2! would have given Black good winning chances.

c) **14 ♖c2 ♔a6** 15 ♔e2 ♔×e2 16 ♖×e2 ♕g4 17 ♕d1 ♕ge5 18 ♕×e5 ♕×e5 19 ♖d2 ♕c4 20 ♖c3 ♖×c3 21 bc ♖a3 22 f4 e6 23 ♖f2 ♖ba8 $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ Hort-Damjanović, Zagreb 1972.

14 ... ♕e8

a) **14 ... ♔a6!?** 15 e5!? ♕×e5 16 ♕×c5 de 17 ♖×e5 ♔b7 18 ♔f3 ♖d8 19 ♖c2 ♕×d5 = F. Portisch-Gaprinidashvili, Tbilisi 1971.

b) **14 ... ♖b7?!** (wasting a move-Black should be more direct) 15 ♖c2 ♕e8 16 ♖e3 ♔a5 17 ♔c2 ♖ab8 18 ♖e1 ♕c7 19 ♖c1 ♕a6 20 a3 (preventing ... ♕b4) 20 ... ♕c7 21 ♕d2! ± Gligorić-Udovčić, Rovinj/Zagreb 1970.

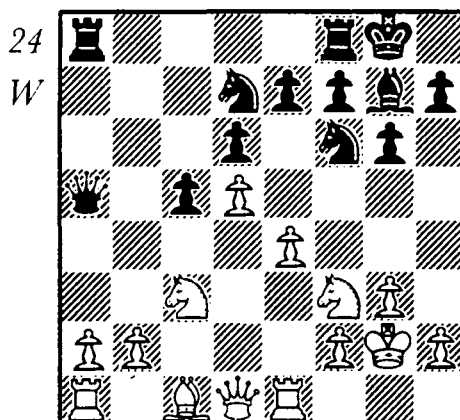
The text aims at an immediate ... ♕c7-b5.

15 ♖f4 ♕c7

Black is now a tempo up on the Gligorić-Diez del Corral game in chapter 3 (page 28) because White has played the rather useless move h3. Because of this extra tempo ... ♕b5 is now a threat.

E

12 ... ♔a5 (24)



13 ♖d2

13 ♖g5 h6 14 ♖×f6 ♖×f6 15 ♔d3 ♖fb8 16 ♖e2 ♖×b2! 17 ♖×b2 ♔×c3 18 ♔×c3 ♖×c3 19 ♖ab1 ♖×b2 20 ♖×b2 ♖a4 ± P. Parr-Browne, Adelaide 1971.

13 ... ♖fb8

13 ... ♕g4 14 ♔c2 ♖fb8 transposes.

14 ♔c2 ♕g4

15 ♕d1

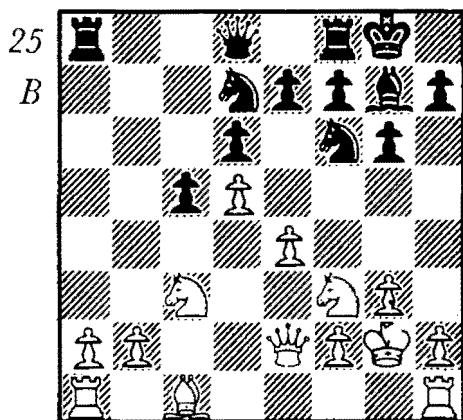
15 a4? ♔b4 16 h3 ♕ge5 17 ♕×e5 ♖×e5 (not 17 ... ♕×e5 18 ♕b5 ♔c4 19 ♖c3±) 18 ♕d1 ♔b3 19 ♔×b3 ♖×b3 20 ♖e3 ♖×b2! 21 ♖a2 (21 ♖×b3 ♖×a1 22 ♖b7 ♕f6 23 ♖×e7 ♖×a4 ±) 21 ... ♖×e3 22 ♕×e3 ♖d4 23 ♕c4 f5! (often a useful break when queens have been exchanged, since White's d-pawn immediately becomes weak) 24 ef gf 25 ♖g5?! ♖f7 26 f4 ♖b8! ± Kuzmin-Georgadze, $\frac{1}{2}$ -final 40th USSR Ch 1972.

15 ... ♔b5

16 ♖c3 ♕de5

17 ♗×e5 ♗×e5 (threatening 26... ♗c1 and 26...
 18 ♖e2 c4 ♖
 Makogonov–Korsunsky, USSR 27 ♖e×b2) 27 ♖c2 ♖b4! 28 f3
 1975, continued 19 a4 ♖a6 20 ♗e3 ♖d4 29 ♖f1 ♖b7 30 a5 ♖b3 31
 ♖c8 21 ♖a3 ♖ab8 22 ♖d2? (22 ♖b1 ♗b4 32 ♖a×b2 cb 33 ♖×b2
 a5) 22... ♗d3 23 ♖e2 ♖×b2! ♖×e3 34 ♖c8+ ♗g7 35 ♖c4
 24 ♗×b2 ♗×b2 25 ♖a2 c3 ♖d2+ ♖ ♖.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 e4 ♙×f1 8
♚×f1 g6 9 g3 ♙g7 10 ♚g2 0-0 11
♘f3 ♘bd7 12 ♔e2 (25)



White's queen not only defends b2 but also controls c4, so that if 12 ... ♘g4 White can play 13 h3 ♘ge5 14 ♘×e5 ♘×e5, and now 15 f4 forces the knight to retreat. Black must therefore refrain from ... ♘g4 until such time as White can no longer play f4.

A 12 ... ♚b8

B 12 ... ♚a5

12 ... ♘b6 leads nowhere after 13 ♙d2, e.g. 13 ... ♘a4 14 b3 ♘b6 15 a4 ♚b8 16 ♖b1 ± Podgayets -

Viglundsson, Mayaguez 1971.

A

12 ... ♚b8

This move sets up pressure on b2 and prevents 13 ♙d2.

13 h3 ♚b7

14 ♖d1 ♖fb8

The most natural continuation, though 14 ... ♖a6!? is also possible, intending to meet 15 a4 with 15 ... ♖fa8.

15 ♖b1

If 15 a4 intending 16 ♘b5, Black should play 15 ... ♚a6 (16 ♘b5?? ♖×b5).

15 ... ♘e8

16 ♙d2

A passive move but if 16 ♙g5 ♙×c3 17 bc ♚×b1 ±.

16 ... ♘c7

17 a3?!

Better is 17 b3, but not 17 ♙e1 ♘b5 (or 17 ... ♙×c3).

17 ... ♚a6!

18 ♚×a6 ♖×a6 =

19 ♖dc1 ♚f8

20 ♙f4?!

White should cut his losses and

play for a draw by 20 b4 ♘xc3 21 ♘xc3 ♖xa3 22 ♘d2, though Black is still slightly better.

20 ... f5!

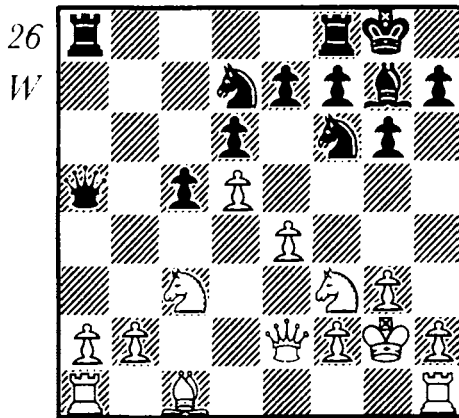
21 ef gf

22 ♘h4 ½-½

Podgayets-Shereshevsky, Minsk 1972. But Benko points out that Black has winning chances after 22 ... ♘xc3 23 ♖xc3 ♘xd5 24 ♖f3 ♘xf4 25 ♖xf4 e6, e.g. 26 g4 ♖xa3 27 gf e5±.

B

12 ... ♖a5 (26)



13 ♘d2

13 ♘f4 allows 13 ... ♘g4 since 14 h3 ♘ge5 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 cannot be followed up with 16 f4.

After 13 ♘f4 ♘g4 14 ♘d2 ♘ge5 15 ♘e3 (better is 15 ♖fc1) 15 ... ♖fb8 White should play 16 ♖ab1∞. Instead Gerusel-K. Pedersen, West Germany 1971 went 16 f4?! ♘g4! (not 16 ... ♖xb2?! 17 ♘d1 ♘g4 18 ♘xb2 ♘xe3 19 ♖xe3 ♘xb2 20 ♘c4± - Benko) 17 ♖xg4 (17 ♘b3 ♘xe3+ 18 ♖xe3 ♖b4±) 17 ... ♖xb2 18 ♘e2 ♖xd2 19 ♘xd2 ♖xd2 20 ♖ad1 ♖c2 21 ♖f3 ♖xa2 22 ♖he1 c4 23 ♖cl ♖a4 24 ♖h1 ♘b2 25 ♘c3 ♖b3 26 ♖d1 ♖a5 27 ♖c2 ♘xc3 28 ♖e3 ♖al 29 ♖xal ♘xal 0-1.

13 ... ♖fb8

14 ♖ab1 ♘e8

15 ♖hd1 ♘c7

16 a4

Otherwise 16 ... ♘b5.

16 ... ♖b7

Better is 16 ... ♖b3 and if 17 ♖c4 ♖b4.

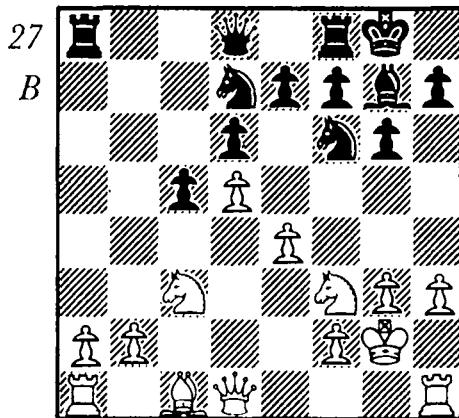
17 ♘e1 ♖ab8

18 ♖c2 ♖a6

19 b3±

White has succeeded in consolidating his extra pawn; Rytov-Popov, Tallinn 1973.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♗×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 e4 ♗×f1 8
♙×f1 g6 9 g3 ♗g7 10 ♖g2 0-0 11
♘f3 ♘bd7 12 h3 (27)



White prevents the manoeuvre ... ♘g4 followed by ... ♘ge5 which succeeds in exchanging knights and/or leaves Black with a well placed knight on e5 ready to jump in to c4 or d3. The disadvantage of the text is that it presents Black with an extra tempo with which he can pursue his Q-side attack. We shall now examine the various alternatives that are directed towards that aim.

A 12 ... ♘b6

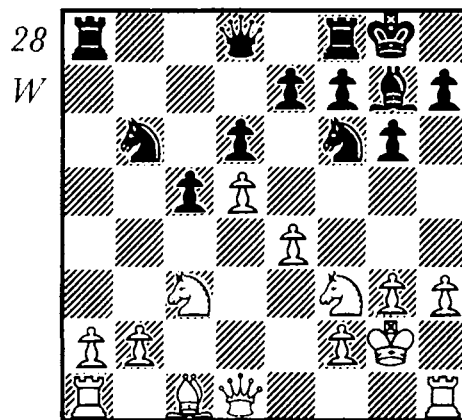
B 12 ... ♖a5

C 12 ... ♖b6

12 ... ♖c7 will transpose to variations considered elsewhere: 13 ♖e1 leads to chapter 4 and 13 ♖e2 ♖b7! to chapter 5.

A

12 ... ♘b6 (28)



This move was tried twice by Benko in 1975 as an alternative to the queen moves given in his book. The strategy behind ... ♘b6 is to prepare for the central break ... e6 and to prevent the advance e5 by increasing the pressure on White's d5 pawn. Black's knight move also retains the option of continuing

with the more traditional forms of Benko Gambit counterplay, e.g. by ... ♖a4 or ... ♖c4.

13 ♖e1 ♗d7

Still keeping his options open.

14 ♗c2

14 e5? loses a pawn and leaves Black with the better game: 14 ... de 15 ♖×e5 ♗b7 16 ♗b3 e6 (also possible is 16 ... ♖f×d5 17 ♖×d5 ♗×d5+ 18 ♗×d5 ♖×d5 19 ♖d2 ♖b4 with the better ending for Black, but the text move keeps up the tension and achieves even more) 17 ♖e3 ♖fc8 18 ♖d3 ♖f×d5 19 ♖×d5 c4! 20 ♗×b6 ♗×d5+ 21 ♖g1 cd ♯ Taylor-Benko, World Open 1975.

14 ... ♗b7

This move highlights one of the drawbacks of White's king being on g2—there are tactical possibilities along the a8–h1 diagonal.

15 ♖g5 h6

Not 15 ... e6 16 ♗b3! and if 16 ... cd 17 ♖×f6 ♖×f6 18 ♖×d5 or 16 ... c4 17 ♗b4 (or ♗b5). In each case White succeeds in keeping the h1–a8 diagonal closed.

16 ♖×f6

Virtually forced, since there is no really good square for the bishop (if 16 ♖e3 ♖c4).

16 ... ♖×f6

17 ♗b3 ♖fb8

18 e5

Forcing a continuation which leads to a drawn ending, but White

would appear to have nothing better, e.g. 18 ♖ad1 ♗a6 ♯.

18 ... de

19 ♖×e5 e6

20 ♖ad1

Not 20 ♖c6? ♖×d5! 21 ♖×d5 ♗×c6, or 21 ♖×b8 ♖e3++, or finally 21 ♗×b7 ♖×b7 ♯.

20 ... ed

If 20 ... ♖×e5 21 ♖×e5 and now:

a) 21 ... c4 22 ♗b5 ♖×d5 23 ♖d×d5! ed 24 ♖e8+ ♖g7 25 ♗×b7 ♖×b7 26 ♖×a8±±.

b) 21 ... ♗c7 22 ♖e4! ♖a4 23 ♖×a4! ♖×b3 24 ♖×a8+ ♖b8 25 ♖×b8+ ♗×b8 26 d6±±.

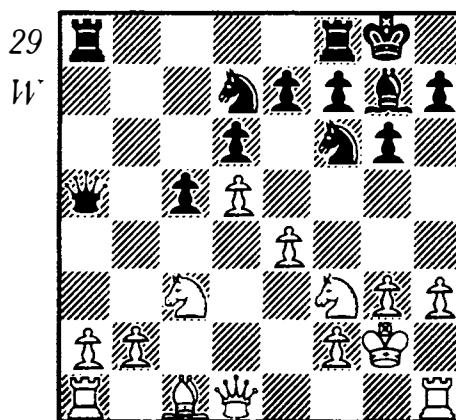
21 ½–½

Gligorić-Benko, Lone Pine 1975.

After 21 ♖×d5 ♖×d5 22 ♗×d5 ♗×d5+ 23 ♖×d5 ♖×b2 24 ♖×c5 ♖a×a2 25 ♖d3 (or 25 ♖f1), Black's minimal advantage would not be sufficient to win. The analysis in this variation is by Benko.

B

12 ... ♗a5 (29)



13 ♖e1

White prepares to defend his b-pawn by ♖e2. Another move which serves the same aim is 13 ♖c2, which was played in Popov-Tringov, Varna 1972. After 13 ... ♗b6 14 ♗d2?! (better 14 ♖e1) 14 ... ♗fd7 15 ♗b3 ♖a6 16 ♖d1 ♗a4! 17 ♗d2?! ♗xc3 18 bc ♖e2 (this is one reason why 14 ♖e1 is necessary) 19 a3, Black could have won with 19 ... f5! and if 20 ef ♖xf5 21 ♖f1 ♖af8; or if 20 ♖a2 ♗f6 21 ef ♗xd5.

13 ... ♖fb8

14 ♖e2

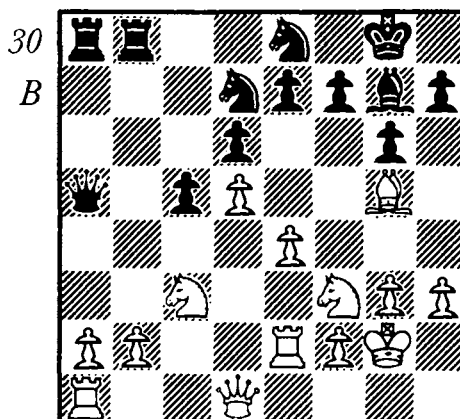
14 ♖c2 ♗e8 15 ♗g5? (15 ♗d2 ♗c7 ♢) 15 ... ♖xb2! 16 ♖xb2 ♗xc3 17 ♖b7 ♖a7!! 18 ♖xa7 (18 ♖c6 f6 19 ♖ab1 ♗xe1 20 ♖b7 ♖a4 21 ♖xd7 ♖xc6 22 dc ♗a5! ♢ ♢) 18 ... ♖xa7 19 ♗d2 (19 ♗xe7 ♗xa1 20 ♖xa1 f6! ♢ ♢) 19 ... ♗xa1 20 ♖xa1 f6 ♢ Vaiser-Georgadze, USSR Young Masters Ch 1973.

14 ... ♗e8

14 ... ♖b7 15 ♗g5 ♖ab8 16 ♖c1 ♖a6 (threatening 17 ... ♗xd5) 17 ♖b1 ♗b6 18 ♖e1 ♗fd7 19 ♖c2! (the only move—if 19 ♗xe7? ♗c8 20 ♗g5 ♗xc3 ♢ ♢) 19 ... h6 20 ♗cl c4 21 ♖e2 ♗a4 22 ♗xa4 ♖xa4 23 ♖xc4 (23 b3 cb 24 ab ♖xb3 25 ♖xb3 ♖xb3=. The text is a winning try.) 23 ... ♖xa2 24 ♖c2 ♗c5 25 e5 ♖b4 26 b3? ♖xb1! 27 ♖xb1

♖xc4 28 ed ed 29 ♗f4 ♖xb3 ♢ ♢ Knaak-Tseshkovsky, Leipzig 1975.

15 ♗g5 (30)



15 ... h6!

Experience has shown this to be Black's only satisfactory move.

a) 15 ... ♗xc3?! 16 bc ♖xc3 17 ♗xe7 ♗e5 (17 ... f6 18 e5!) 18 ♖c3 ♖b2 19 ♗h4 ♗xf3 20 ♖xf3 ♗f6 21 ♖c1 ♖c5 22 ♖c3± Knaak-Damjanović, Sombor 1972.

b) 15 ... ♗e5 16 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 17 ♖c1 ♖a7 18 ♖d3± ♗c7?! 19 f4! ♗f6 (after 19 ... ♗xc3 20 bc Black is threatened with the advance e5) 20 ♗xf6 ef 21 b3± Knaak-Bellon, Pula 1975.

16 ♗f4

Unclear is 16 ♗xe7 f6 17 e5, an idea of Knaak's which still awaits a practical test.

16 ... ♗c7!

Stronger than the 16 ... g5?! 17 ♗cl ♗c7 18 h4! g4 19 ♗h2 ♗e5 20 ♖c2 h5 21 f3!± of Malich-Ciocâltea, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

17 ♖d2

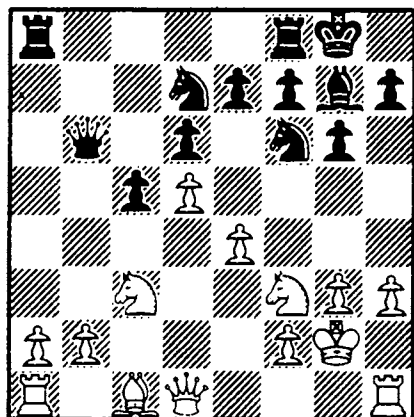
Or 17 e5 d6 18 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 19 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 20 ♖xc5 ♖xb2 21 ♖xc7 ♖xc3 22 ♖xc7 ♖a3! ♢.

17 ... ♖xb2! ♢

C

12 ... ♖b6 (31)

31
11'



13 ♖e1 ♖fb8

Interesting is 13 ... ♖b7!?, and then playing to open up the a8-h1 diagonal with ... e6. The correspondence game Havas-Valvo, USA 1974 continued 14 ♖e2 (better is 14 ♖c2 ♗b6 15 b3-Benko) 14 ... ♗b6 15 ♖c2 ♗a4! 16 ♗d2 e6, and now 17 ♗xa4 ♖xa4 18 b3 ♖xe4!? 19 ♗xe4 ♗xd5 20 ♗b2 ♗xb2 21 ♖xb2 f5!∞ or 18 ... ♖b4 19 a3 ♖b6∞-Valvo.

14 ♖b1

14 ♖c2 ♖a6 15 ♖c1 ♗b6 16 ♗g5 h6 17 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♖c1 ♗d7 19 b3 c4∞ Bertok-Gliksman, Zagreb 1971.

14 ... ♖a6

15 ♖c2 ♖b7

16 ♗g5 ♗c8

17 ♗f4

17 ♗xc7 is met by 17 ... h6 or 17 ... f6, in each case followed by ... ♗c5.

17 ... c4

So as to meet 18 e5 with 18 ... ♗c5.

18 ♗e3 ♗c5

Now 18 ... ♗c5? fails to 19 ♗xc5 d6 20 e5±, while 18 ... ♗xc3? is also bad for Black after 19 bc ♖xb1 20 ♖xb1 ♖xa2 21 ♖xa2 ♖xa2 22 ♖b7±.

19 ♗xe5 ♗xe5

20 ♖ed1 ♗f6

21 ♗d4

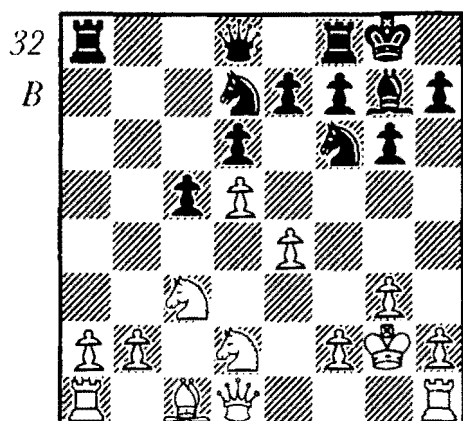
21 f4 ♗xc3 22 bc ♖xa2 23 ♖xa2 ♖xa2+ 24 ♗f3 ♖b3 ♢.

21 ... ♗d7

22 b3±

Instead the game Cobo-Vasyukov, Polanica Zdroj 1972, went 22 a3?! ♗xd4 23 ♖xd4 ♗e5 =.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 ba ♙×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 e4 ♙×f1 8 ♙×f1 g6 9 g3 ♙g7 10 ♙g2 0-0 11 ♘f3 ♘bd7 12 ♘d2 (32)



Yet another way to play consolidation of the Q-side while preventing ... ♘g4. This position can arise from chapter 15 via the move order 7 ♘f3 g6 8 ♘d2 ♙a5 9 g3 ♙g7 10 e4 ♙×f1 11 ♙×f1 0-0 12 ♙g2.

12 ... ♙a5

a) **12 ... ♙b8!?** 13 ♘c4 ♘b6 14 ♘×b6 ♙×b6 15 ♙c2 ♙fb8 16 ♙b1 ♘g4 17 h3 ♘e5 18 b3 ♙a6 19 a4 c4! 20 b4 ♘d3 21 b5 ♙a5 22 ♙d2 ♘c5 23 h4 ♘b3+ Mesing-Vukić, Sarajevo 1974.

b) **12 ... ♘b6** 13 ♙e2 ♙e8? (better 13 ... ♘fd7) 14 ♘c4 ♘×c4 15 ♙×c4 ♙b6 16 ♙d1 (more accurate is 16 ♙e1) 16 ... ♙b4 17 ♙e2 ♘d7 18 a3 ♙b3 19 a4 ♙eb8 = Mecking-Szabò, Buenos Aires 1970.

13 ♘c4 ♙a6

13 ... ♙b4 14 ♙e2 ♘b6 15 ♘×b6 ♙×b6 transposes to the Donner-Browne game mentioned on page . The text is more active, setting up pressure along the a6-f1 diagonal.

14 ♙e2 ♙fb8

15 ♙e1 ♙b4

16 ♘a3 ♘e5

Black does not fear the exchange of queens because of his domination of the light squares, e.g. 17 ♙×a6 ♙×a6 18 ♙d1 ♘×e4 19 ♘c2 ♙c4+ (or maybe even 19 ... ♘×c3!? 20 ♘×b4 cb 21 cb bc).

17 ♘c2 ♘d3

18 ♘×b4 ♘×e1+

19 ♙×e1 cb

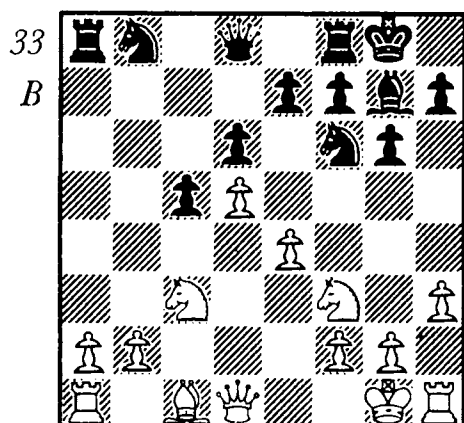
20 ♘d1 ♙d3

Black has a very active game in return for the pawn. Dommes-Zilberman, Gelendzhik 1975, continued: 21 f3 ♖d7 22 ♗e3 ♖c5

23 ♖f2 ♗b5 24 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 25 ♗d2 b3 26 a4 ♖c8 27 ♖d1 ♗c2 28 ♗xc2 bc 29 ♖c3 ♖b8 30 ♖c1 ♖xb2 ♢.

8 White's King Runs to h2

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 e4 ♙×f1 8
♚×f1 g6 9 h3 ♙g7 10 ♘f3 0-0 11
♚g1 (33)



This variation was invented by Gligorić and first appeared in the international arena in his game with Browne at Skopje 1970. The idea is to put the king on a slightly safer square than g2 where it might eventually be embarrassed on the long diagonal (for example if the c-pawn advances and the d-pawn becomes weak). The disadvantage of this plan is that it takes one move longer than the g3, ♚g2 manoeuvre and when White's king

eventually arrives on h2 Black's Q-side attack is therefore one tempo further advanced than in the corresponding positions from chapters 4–7. Also, it is not absolutely clear that White's king is safer on h2.

A 11 ... ♘bd7

B 11 ... ♘a6

C 11 ... e6?!

A

11 ... ♘bd7

12 ♚h2 ♙a5

The most active square for the queen. If 12 ... ♙b6 the d7 knight is unable to follow its destiny to a4 or c4 via b6. Øgaard–Gheorghiu, Helsinki 1972 continued 13 ♖e1 ♘e8 (maybe 13 ... ♖fb8 first is better) 14 ♖e2 ♘e5?! 15 ♘×e5 ♙×e5+ 16 ♚hl ♘c7 17 ♙g5 ♖fe8 18 ♖c1 ♖a7 19 ♙d3 ♙a6 20 ♙d2 ½–½.

13 ♖e1 ♖fb8

14 ♖e2

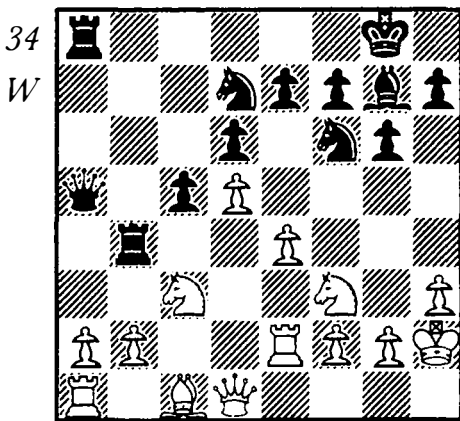
This move has been more popular than 14 ♙c2 which was played in the Gligorić–Browne

game. The text move is part of a plan to consolidate the Q-side by Rc2 and Ad2 , thus leaving the queen free to perform actively elsewhere. After 14 Rc2 Black has:

a) **14 ... Ab6** 15 Ad1! Ra6 (also possible is 15 ... Aa4) 16 Ad2 Rc4?! 17 Ac3 (stronger is 17 Rxc4 Ac4 18 $\text{Ac3}\pm$) 17 ... Afd7 18 b3 Ra6 19 a4 Ac8 20 Rab1 Aa7 21 Ad1 Rb7 22 Ac3 Ah6 , and White's advantage was hardly tangible; Gligorić-Browne, Skopje 1970.

b) **14 ... Ae8** (intending ... Ac7 and ... Ab5 as usual) 15 Ad2 Ra6 16 a4? Rb4 17 a5 Rab8 18 Ad1 R4b7 19 Rb1 Ac7 20 b3 Ab5 21 Rc4 Ac7 22 Ac3 Rxc4 23 Ac4 Rxb3 24 Rxb3 $\text{Rxb3}\mp$ Pytel-Peev, Lublin 1972.

14 ... Rb4! (34)



A very strong move discovered by Vasyukov. The rook intensifies the pressure on White's e4 pawn and thereby prevents White from continuing with the planned 15

Rc2 . White can drive this rook away by a3 at any point in the game but once he does so b3 is seriously weakened and Black can set up a blockade on that square.

Weaker alternatives are:

a) **14 ... Ae8** 15 Ag5 (if 15 Rc2 Ac7 16 Ad2 Ab5 17 a4 Rxc3 18 Axc3 Axc3 19 bc Ae5! 20 Ac5 de 21 Rd3 $\text{Rb3} =$ Hort-Jimenez, Palma Interzonal 1970) 15 ... Rxb2? 16 Rxb2 Axc3 17 $\text{Ad2}\pm\pm$.

b) **14 ... Ab6** 15 e5! \pm .

But almost as strong as the text is:

c) **14 ... Ra7** (Benko considers 14 ... Rb7 to be more accurate) 15 Rc2 (not 15 e5? de 16 Ac5 Ac5 17 Rxc5 Ag4+ ; one reason why White's king might not be safer on h2 than on g2.) 15 ... Ab6 16 Re2 (Now 16 e5 is possible because 16 ... de? 17 Ac5 , threatening Ac6 , would give White an overwhelming position; so Black must retreat his knight: 16 ... Afd7 17 ed ed 18 Af4 $\text{Ac4}\infty$; or 16 ... Afd7 17 e6?! fe 18 de $\text{Af8}\mp$) 16 ... Aa4! 17 Ag5 R7b7 18 Ac4 Rxa4 19 Re1 (19 Rc4 Ra6 20 Acl is met by 20 ... Ad7 when White's rook is seen to be misplaced) 19 ... Rxb2! 20 Rxb2 Rxb2 21 Rxb2 Ag4+ (with White's king on g2 this combination would not work) 22 hg Axb2 23 Axe7 Rd7 24 Ah4 c4 \mp Kane-Browne, USA Ch 1973.

15 ♔g1

So that there will be no combinations based on ... ♖g4+.

15 ... ♖e8

16 a3

This move is unappetizing but it is almost impossible to find a good alternative.

16 ... ♖b7

17 ♖c2 ♖ab8

18 ♗e2 ♖e5

19 ♖×e5 ♗×e5

20 ♗h6 ♖c7

21 ♖ac1 ♖b3!

The thematic blockade.

22 f4

A weakening move, but once again what can White do?

22 ... ♗d4+

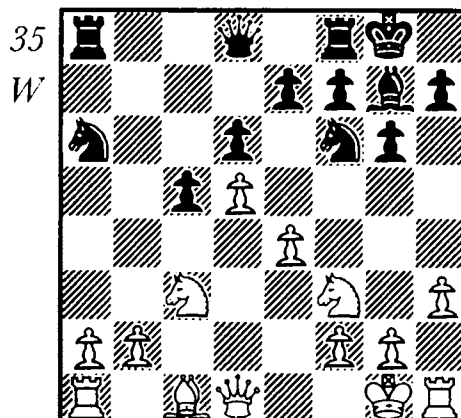
23 ♔h2 ♗a6±

23 ... ♗×c3 would win back the pawn but Black sees no need to release the pressure. 24 ♗g4 ♗c8 25 ♗c2 ♗a6 26 ♗g4 ♖e8 27 ♖e1 ♗d3 28 ♗c2 ♗×e2 29 ♖1×e2 f6 30 h4 ♖c7 31 ♖d1 ♗f7 32 g3 f5! 33 e5 ♖×d5 34 ed ed 35 ♗g5 ♖e8 36 ♖×e8 ♗×e8 37 ♖d2 ♗d7 38 h5 gh 39 ♗h3 ♗c6 40 ♗h4 ♖f3 41 a4 ♖b6 42 ♖c3 ♖c4 43 ♖e2 ♖×b2 44 ♖b5 ♖×a4 45 ♖×d4+ cd 0-1. Portisch-Vasyukov, Manila 1974.

B

11 ... ♖a6 (35)

a6 is a flexible square for the black QN. It can jump in to b4, or to c5 (after ... c4), or it can manoeuvre via c7 to b5.



12 ♔h2 ♗b6

12 ... ♖d7 13 ♖e1 ♗a5 14 ♗g5 ♖fb8 15 ♖e2 leaves White with a solid position. e.g.:

a) 15 ... ♗d8 16 ♖c1 ♖b7 17 ♔g1 ♖e5 18 ♖×e5 ♗×e5 19 b3± Smejkal-Jansa, Luhačovice 1971.

b) 15 ... ♖×b2?? 16 ♖×b2 ♗×c3 17 ♗d2±±.

13 ♖e1

a) 13 ♗e2 ♖fb8 14 ♖d2 ♖c7 15 ♖c4 ♗a6 16 ♗d2 ♖d7 17 ♖he1 ♖e5! 18 ♖×e5 (if 18 b3 ♖×c4 19 ♗×c4 ♗×c4 20 bc ♖b2-Benko) 18 ... ♗×e5+ 19 f4 ♗d4 20 ♗c1 ♗×e2 21 ♖×e2 ♗f8! 22 ♖d1 f5 23 ef gf± H. Camara-Benko, Sao Paulo 1973.

b) 13 ♖d2 ♖d7 14 ♗e2 ♖b4! 15 ♖c4 ♗a6 16 ♖e1 ♖e5 17 ♖×e5 ♗×e5+ 18 g3 ♖fb8 19 ♗×a6 ♖×a6 20 ♖e2 ♖d3± Schaufelberger-Parma, Luxembourg 1971.

13 ... ♖d7

13 ... c4!? is an interesting alternative, intending ... ♖c5 and ... ♖d3.

14 ♖e2 ♜b4!

15 a4

If 15 ♙g5 ♜fe8 16 a3?! ♚a6 17 ♚d2 ♜d3+. Forintos-Bukić, Vrnjačka Banja 1973.

15 ... c4

16 ♙e3 ♜c5

17 ♜d2 ♜bd3

With a knight so firmly entrenched, Black's position plays itself.

18 ♜xc4 ♚b4

19 ♙xc5 ♚xc4

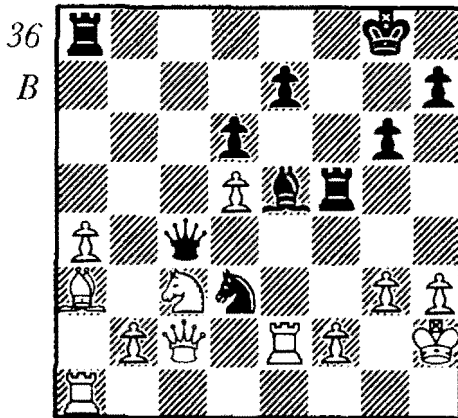
20 ♙a3 f5!

21 ef ♜xf5

Another piece joins in the attack.

22 ♚c2 ♙e5+

23 g3 (36)



23 ... ♜xf2!

24 ♜xe5

If 24 ♜xf2 ♚h4 25 ♜xf5 (or 25 ♜e4 ♜h5!+) 25 ... ♚xg3+ 26 ♚h1 ♚xh3+ 27 ♚g1 ♙d4+ 28 ♚f2! (28 ♜f2 ♜f8 29 ♜e4 ♜f4+) 28 ... ♙xf2+ (stronger than 28 ... gf 29 ♚xd4 ♚f7 30 ♚f2) 29

♜xf2 and White has enough material compensation for the queen but Black can rapidly gain the upper hand with the manoeuvre ... ♜a8-c8-c4.

24 ... de

25 ♙xe7 ♜d3

26 b3 ♚d4

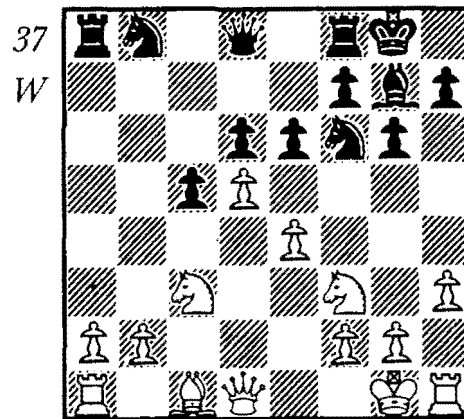
27 ♜d1 ♜e1

28 ♚c4 and 0-1

because of 28 ... ♚d2+ and mate on g2. Trapl-Knaak, Czechoslovakia-East Germany Match 1972.

C

11 ... e6?! (37)



This central break rebounds badly on Black.

12 de fe

13 e5! de

14 ♚xd8 ♜xd8

15 ♙g5 ♜c6

16 ♚h2 ♜b8

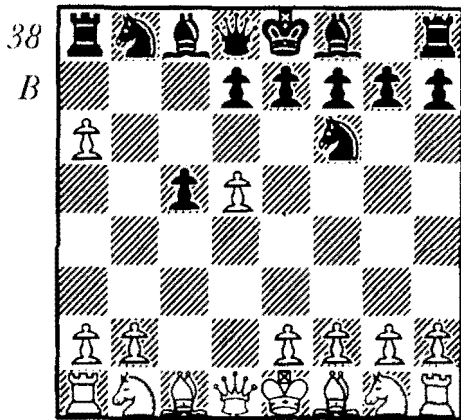
17 ♙xf6 ♙xf6

18 ♜e4

White has the better ending. O'Kelly-Honfi, Budapest 1972.

9 g3-Introduction and Early Divergences

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 ba (38)



5 ... ♙x a6

It is worth mentioning the possibility of 5 ... ♙x a6 in conjunction with g3: 5 ... ♙x a6 6 g3 d6 7 ♘c3 g6 8 ♘f3 ♙g7 9 ♙g2 0-0 10 0-0 ♙b6 11 ♘d2 ♘c7 12 b3 ♙a6. This position, which actually arose by transposition, occurred in the game Keres-Opočensky, Pärnu 1937. Note that after 5 ... ♙x a6 Black can not normally get his b8 knight to c7 in the fianchetto variation and so this line is of some independent significance. The conclusion of the

game will be found in the historical introduction, page 9.

A 6 g3

B 6 ♘c3

These two moves usually transpose but there are some lines in which the delay in playing ♘c3 is important.

A

6 g3 g6

6 ... d6 will transpose to the text.

7 ♙g2

7 b3 looks at first sight to be simply a transposition to the text, but in fact it is an inaccuracy which allows Black an unusual tactical resource: 7 ... ♙b7! 8 ♙g2 (if 8 ♘c3 ♙g7 9 ♙g2 ♘xd5 ♢ ♢) 8 ♙e6 9 ♙b2 ♙xd5 10 ♙xd5 ed 11 e3 ♙g7 12 ♘f3 0-0 13 0-0 ♘c6 14 ♘e5 ♙b6 15 ♘d2 ♘xe5 16 ♙xe5 ♙e6 17 ♙b2 ♙a7 18 ♙c2 d6 ♢ Holmov-Mochalov, USSR 1974.

7 ... d6

8 b3

a) 8 ♘h3 ♙g7 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♙d2 (10 ♘c3 transposes to variation B1) 10 ... ♘bd7, and now:

a1) **11** ♖f4 ♗h5 12 ♗c3 ♗×f4 13 ♗×f4 ♖a5 14 ♖c2 ♗b6 15 ♖ac1 ♗c4 16 ♖fe1 ♖fb8 17 b3 ♗a3 18 ♖d2 c4∞ Doroshkevich-Platonov, Cheliabinsk 1975.

a2) **11** ♗c3 ♖b6 12 ♗d2 ♖fb8 13 ♖e1 ♗e8 (13 ... ♗g4?! 14 ♗×g7 ♖×g7 15 b3 ♗ge5 16 ♖c2± Puc-Kozomara, Yugoslav Ch 1951) 14 ♗×g7 ♖×g7 15 b3 ♗c7∞ The position is similar to the Pytel-Levy game in the text.

b) **8** ♗d2 is an interesting idea of Macskasy's designed to neutralize Black's dark squared bishop. Benko-Berry, Canadian Open Ch 1971 continued 8 ... ♗g7 9 ♗c3 0-0 10 ♗h3 ♗bd7 11 0-0 ♗b6 12 ♗f4 ♖d7 13 b3 (otherwise ... ♗a4) 13 ... g5!? 14 ♗h3∞-Benko.

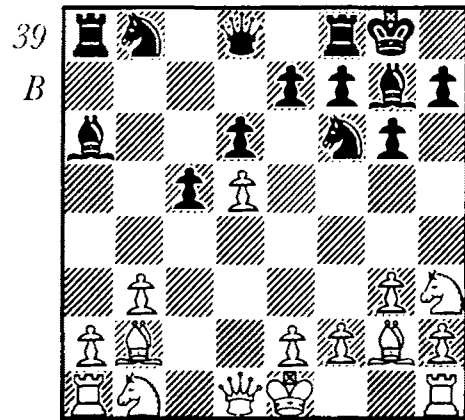
8 ... ♗g7

9 ♗b2 0-0

10 ♗h3 (39)

a) **10** ♗f3 allows Black to attack the d-pawn: 10 ... ♗b7 11 0-0 ♗a6 12 ♗c3 ♗×d5 13 ♖d2 ♗×c3 14 ♗×c3 ♗×c3 15 ♖×c3 ♖a7± Möhring-Tseshkovsky, Leipzig 1975.

b) **10** ♗bd2 ♗bd7 11 e4 ♖a5 12 ♖c2 c4!? 13 bc ♖fc8 14 ♗c3 ♖c5 15 ♖c1 ♗g4 16 ♗h3 ♗de5 17 ♗fl ♗e3!? 18 fe ♖×e3+ 19 ♖d1 ♗×c4 20 ♗×c4 ♗×c4 21 ♖e1 ♖a7 22 ♖d3 ♗×c3 23 ♖×c3 ♖a4+ 24 ♖e2 ♗e5= Ruderfer-Alburt, Daugavpils 1971.



10 ... ♗bd7

11 0-0 ♖b6

a) **11** ... ♖b8 12 ♗c3 ♗b6 13 ♖e1 (or 13 a4 ♖d7 14 ♗f4 g5 15 a5 gf 16 ab ♖×b6 17 ♗d2± Øgaard-Day, Haifa Olympiad 1976) 13 ... ♖d7 14 e4± Pytel-Damjanović, Dortmund 1974. Black does not have any counterplay.

b) **11** ... ♖c7 12 ♖e1 ♖fb8 13 ♖d2 ♖a7 14 ♗c3 ♗c8 15 ♗f4 ♗h6 16 ♖c2 ♗g4 17 ♗d2 ♗ge5 18 ♖ecl ♗g7 19 ♗fl ♗b6 20 e4 ♗a6 21 ♗×a6 ♖×a6 22 ♗d3 ♗×d3 23 ♖×d3 ♗×c3 24 ♖×c3 ♖b7 25 a4± Schinzel-Pioch, Polish Ch 1972.

c) **11** ... ♖b8 and now:

c1) **12** ♖d2 ♖b4 (12 ... c4? 13 b4±) 13 ♗c3 ♗e4! 14 ♗×e4 ♖×e4 15 ♗×g7 ♖×g7 16 ♗c3 ♖d4 (16 ... ♖b4!) 17 ♖fd1 ♖×d2 18 ♖×d2 ♖fb8 19 ♖b1 (19 ♗f4 ♗e5! 20 ♖b1 ♖a7 21 f3± Pytel-Gheorghiu, Bucharest 1973) 19 ... ♖b6 20 ♖db2 ♗c8 (Evans-

De Fotis, USA 1972) 21 f3 followed by ♖f2±

c2) 12 ♖c3! ♖c8 (12 ... ♖b6 13 ♖e1 ♖a7 14 ♖f4-threat h4±-14 ... g5?! 15 ♖h3! h6 16 f4!± Gheorghiu-Miles, Teesside 1975) 13 ♖e1 ♖a7?! (better is 13 ... ♖c7 followed by ... ♖b7) 14 ♖f4 ♖b7 15 ♖a3!± Portisch-Geller, Biel Interzonal 1976.

12 ♖c3

12 ♖d2 ♖fb8 13 ♖c3 (this move must be played sooner or later to prevent ... c4), and now instead of 13 ... ♖a7? 14 ♖e1 ♖e8 15 ♖a3 ♖xc3 16 ♖xc3 as in Guil. Garcia-Peev, Cienfuegos 1973, Black should play 13 ... ♖e8 at once.

12 ... ♖fb8

13 ♖f4 ♖e8

Black can afford to exchange bishops because White has no attacking prospects on the K-side.

14 ♖xg7 ♖xg7

15 ♖d2 ♖c5

16 ♖c2 ♖c7

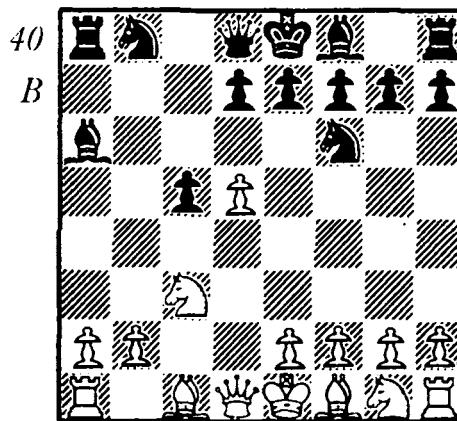
Intending ... ♖b5 and ... ♖d4.

17 a4?!

So far we have been following the game Pytel-Levy, Nice Olympiad 1974, and now Black's best plan, according to Benko, is 17 ... ♖a5 followed by ... ♖b4±.

B

6 ♖c3 (40)



6 ... g6

7 g3 d6

B1 8 ♖g2

B2 8 ♖f3

An exaggerated form of variation B2 is 8 ♖h3!? ♖g7 9 ♖f4 ♖bd7 10 h4!? 0-0?! (10 ... h5 or 10 ... h6 would be safer) 11 h5! ♖e5 12 hg hg 13 ♖h3! ♖a5 14 ♖c2 ♖fb8 (14 ... ♖c8 merits attention, and if 15 ♖g2 ♖f5 16 e4 ♖g4 with the initiative-Benko) 15 ♖e6!? (L. Kovács Benko, Debrecen 1975), and now Black should play 15 ... ♖xd5! 16 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 (or 16 ... ♖xc3 17 ♖d2 ♖a4 18 ♖xc3 ♖c4 19 0-0∞) 17 ♖d2 ♖h8±-Benko.

B1

8 ♖g2 ♖g7

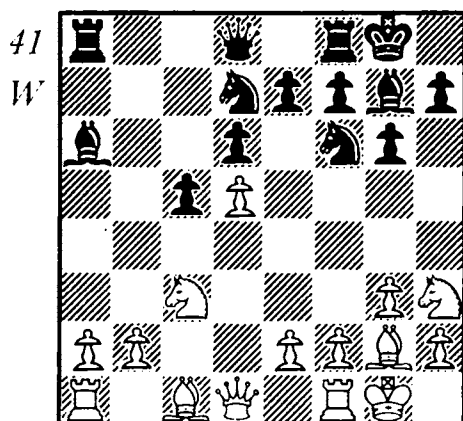
9 ♖h3

a) 9 e4 0-0 10 ♖ge2 ♖bd7 11 0-0 ♖e5 mixes two systems in a way that favours Black. The pressure along the a6-f1 diagonal combined with the invasion of d3 by Black's knight ensure that White will have many problems to solve.

b) 9 ♖a4+? is nonsense.

c) 9 ♖f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♜bd7 leads into chapters 9-14.

9 ... 0-0
10 0-0 ♜bd7 (41)



This position is almost identical to that at the start of chapters 9-14, but with one important difference—White's knight is on h3 instead of f3. While this makes White's d-pawn more secure (direct defence from g2 and later from the knight on f4) it means that White's KN is less able to come to the aid of his Q-side defences and since the battle is inevitably fought on the Q-side this difference must favour Black.

11 ♖c2

a) 11 ♜e1 ♖b6 12 ♖c2 transposes to the text.

b) 11 ♜b1 ♖b6 12 ♖c2 transposes to the text (note to White's 12th move).

c) 11 f4?! ♖c7 12 ♖c2 ♜fb8 13 ♜g5 ♜g4 14 ♜e1 ♜h6 15 ♜d2 c4 16 ♜ab1 ♖a7+ 17 ♜h1 ♜f5+

Darznick-Shereshevsky, USSR 1972.

d) 11 ♜f4 ♖c7 12 ♖c2 ♜fb8 13 ♜b1 c4! 14 ♜h3?! (14 ♜d2 ♜c5 15 ♜fc1∞—Benko) 14 ... ♜c5 15 ♜g5 ♜c8! 16 f3 ♜a4! ♢ Yanofsky-Gheorghiu, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

e) 11 ♜d2 ♖b6 12 ♜b1 (12 ♜h1? ♜e5 13 ♖c2 ♜fb8 14 f4 ♜c4 15 b3 ♖b4! ♢ Golombek-Sefer, Trenčianske-Teplice 1949—see chapter 1, page 12 for the complete score) 12 ... ♜fb8 13 b3 ♜c8 14 ♖c2 ♜c7 15 a4 ♜f6 ♢ Antoshin-Mihailjčičin, Sarajevo 1970.

11 ... ♖a5

a) 11 ... ♖b6 12 ♜e1 (12 ♜b1 c4 13 ♜e3 ♖a5 14 ♜fd1 ♜c5 15 ♜g5 ♜fb8∞ Golz-Witkowski, Dresden 1959) 12 ... ♜fb8 13 ♜b1 (13 b3 c4∞) 13 ... ♜c5∞ Erözbek-Schöneberg, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

b) 11 ... ♖c7 and now:

b1) 12 ♜d1 ♜fb8 13 ♜b1 ♜c5 14 ♜g5 ♜c8 15 ♜ge4 ♜xe4 16 ♜xe4 ♜h3∞ Sloth-Larsen, Denmark 1971.

b2) 12 b3 ♜fb8 13 ♜b1 ♜c8 14 ♜d2 ♖a7 15 ♜f4 ♜c5 = Csom-Toran, Montilla 1975.

12 ♜g5

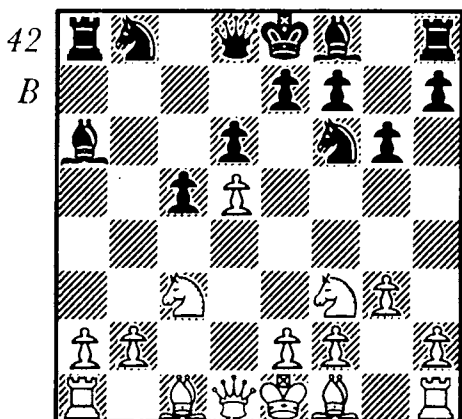
12 ♜d2 ♜fb8 13 ♜fb1 ♖c7 14 ♜f4 c4 15 h4 h5 16 ♜c4 ♜g4 17 ♜c3 ♜de5 18 e3 ♜b5 19 ♜d4 ♜a4 ♢ Feuerstein-Fedorowicz, New York 1976.

12 ... ♖b8
 13 ♖fe1 ♖a7
 14 ♖ab1 ♖ab7
 15 ♙d2 c4=

Denker-Benko, US Open Ch
 1969.

B2

8 ♖f3 (42)



8 ... ♙g7

8 ... ♖bd7 9 ♙h3 transposes to variation B22 after 9 ... ♙g7, but if Black plays to win the d-pawn he runs into serious trouble: 9 ... ♖b6 10 0-0 ♙c4 and now:

a) **11 ♖d2 ♙×d5** 12 ♖×d5 ♖f×d5 13 e4 ♖b4 14 e5! ♙g7 15 ed ed 16 a3 0-0 17 ♙g2! ♖a7 18 ♖c4± Polugayevsky-Szabó, Budapest 1975.

b) **11 b3 ♙×d5?** (11 ... ♖b×d5 12 bc ♖×c3 13 ♖c2 ♖a4 14 ♖b1±) 12 ♖×d5 ♖b×d5 13 c4 ♖c7 14 e5 de 15 ♖×e5 ♙g7 16 ♖c2 e6 17 ♙e3 ♖fd5 18 ♙×c5 ♖c3 19 ♖c1 ♖×a2 20 ♖d1 ♖×d1 21 ♖×d1

♙×c5 22 f4 ♙f6 23 ♖d6 1-0 Timman-Stean, Teesside 1975.

9 ♙h3

This move has become quite popular since 1975. On h3 the bishop prevents ... ♖g4 and interferes with some of Black's traditional ideas (e.g. putting a rook on c8, playing ... ♖c8-c7 while the other knight is still on d7, etc.)

B21 9 ... 0-0

B22 9 ... ♖bd7

B21

9 ... 0-0

10 0-0 ♖bd7

a) **10 ... ♖e8** 11 ♖c2 ♖c7 12 ♖d1 ♙c8 13 ♙×c8 ♖×c8 14 ♙g2 ♖b7 15 ♙g5 ♖e8 16 e4 ♖d7 17 ♖ab1 ♖a6 18 a3± Kraidman-Damjanović, Beersheba 1976.

b) **10 ... ♖b6** 11 ♖b1 ♙c8 12 ♙×c8 ♖×c8 13 c4 ♖bd7 14 h3 h6 15 ♙d2 ♖a6 16 ♖c1 ♖b6 17 b3± Hort-Diesen, Hastings 1974/75.

11 ♖c2 ♖a5

a) **11 ... ♙c4!?** 12 ♖d1 ♖a7 13 e4 ♖a8 14 a3 ♖b8 15 ♖d2 ♙a6 16 ♙f1 ♖ab7 17 ♖a2 ♙×f1 18 ♖×f1 ♖e8 19 b3 ♖a6 20 ♖d1 ♖e2 21 ♖c4 ♖h5∞ Furman-Geller, Spartakiad 1975.

b) **11 ... ♖c7** 12 ♖d1 ♖fb8 13 ♖b1 ♖b4 (13 ... ♖b6 14 b3 ♙c8 15 ♙×c8 ♖×c8 16 ♙g2 ♖a6 17 ♙b2 c4 18 b4± Furman-Barle, Portorož/Ljubljana 1975) 14 b3 ♖ab8 15 ♙a3 ♖4b7 16 ♙b2

♖a5 17 ♙a1 ♜b4 18 ♘a4 ♗b5 19
 ♘c3 ♗b7 20 c4± Vaganian-
 Vasyukov, Vilnius 1975.

c) **11 ... ♘b6** 12 ♜d1 ♙c8 13
 ♙g2 ♘g4 14 ♜b1 ♘c4 15 ♘c4
 ♘ge5 16 ♘×e5 ♘×e5 17 ♘c3
 ♖a5 18 b3 ♙f5 19 ♙e4 ♙×e4 20
 ♘×e4 ♗×a2 21 ♗×a2 ♜×a2±
 Lapenis-Mochalov, Spartakiad
 1975.

d) **11 ... h5?! 12 ♘g5!** (12 ♜d1
 ♖a5 13 ♙g5 ♘g4 14 ♙g2 ♜fe8 15
 ♘d2 ♘de5 16 ♜ac1 ♙c8 17 ♜fl
 ♙f5 18 e4 ♙c8 19 ♘b3 ♗b6∞
 Botterill-Webb, Birmingham
 1975) 12 ... ♘g4 (so far as in
 Timman-Webb, London 1975)
 and now 13 ♙h1 ♖a5 14 f3 ♘ge5
 15 f4±-Webb.

12 ♙d2

12 ♜d1 ♜fb8 13 ♜b1 ♘b6 14
 ♙d2 (14 b3 ♙c8 followed by 15
 ... ♘fd7∞) 14 ... ♘c4 15 ♙e1
 ♜a7 16 ♘d2 ♘×d2 17 ♙×d2
 ♘c8 18 a4 ♜ab7 19 b3 ♗c7 20
 ♙fl ♗d7 21 e4 ♙×fl 22 ♜×fl
 ♗h3∞ Kraidman-R. Jamieson,
 Haifa Olympiad 1976.

12 ... ♜fb8

13 b3?!

Hort suggests 13 ♜ab1 or 13
 ♜fd1.

13 ... ♗b4!

Not 13 ... c4? 14 ♘d4!

14 ♜ab1 c4!

15 ♜fc1

15 ♘d4? ch.

15 ... ♘c5

16 ♘a4 cb

17 ab ♗c4

18 ♘×c5 dc

19 ♙fl ♗×c2

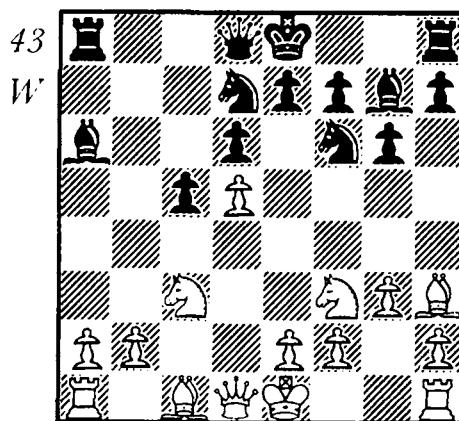
$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Hort-E. Meyer, US Open Ch
 1974.

20 ♜×c2 c4=

B22

9 ... ♘bd7 (43)



10 0-0 ♘b6

10 ... ♖a5 11 ♜e1 (11 ♘d2 0-0
 12 ♗c2 c4 13 ♜b1 ♘b6= Szabo-
 Bronstein, Budapest-Moscow
 match 1971) 11 ... 0-0 12 e4 ♘b6
 13 e5! ♘e8 14 ♙f4 ♘c4 15 ♗c1
 ♗c7 16 ed ed 17 ♙h6± Navarov-
 szky-Georgadze, Tbilisi 1971.

11 ♜e1

11 ♗c2 0-0 12 ♜d1 ♗c7 13 e4
 ♜fb8 14 ♜b1 ♘fd7 15 b3 ♘e5 16
 ♘×e5 ♙×e5 17 ♙b2 ♘d7∞
 Osnos-Palatnik, USSR 1973.

11 ... 0-0

12 ♙f4

a) **12 a3?! ♗c7** 13 ♜b1 ♘fd7 14

$\Delta g2$ $\text{Bf}b8$ 15 $\Delta d2$ $\Delta c5$ 16 $\text{Bc}c2$
c4 ∞ Hort-Bellon, Las Palmas
1975.

b) **12** $\Delta g2$ $\text{Bd}d7$ 13 $\Delta d2$ $\text{Bf}b8$ 14
 $\text{Bc}c2$ $\Delta b7$ 15 e4 $\Delta g4$ 16 h3 $\Delta c5$ 17
f4 $\Delta ec4$ 18 $\Delta \times c4$ $\Delta \times c4$ 19 b3
 $\Delta d4+$ 20 $\text{Bh}h2$ $\Delta a3$ = Szabó-
Vasyukov, Wijk aan Zee 1973.

c) **12** **e4** $\Delta fd7$ 13 $\text{Bc}c2$ $\Delta c4$ 14 Δfl
 $\text{Ba}a5$ 15 $\Delta \times c4$ $\Delta \times c4$ 16 $\Delta d2$ $\text{Ba}a6$
17 $\Delta f4$ $\text{Bf}b8$ 18 e5 $\text{Bb}b7$ 19 $\text{Bc}c4$
 $\Delta b6$ 20 $\text{Bcd}1$ $\text{Bd}d8$ 21 b3 d6 22
 $\Delta \times e5$ $\Delta \times d5$ 23 $\Delta \times d5$ $\text{B} \times d5$ 24
 $\text{B} \times d5$ $\Delta \times d5$ 25 $\Delta \times g7$ $\text{B} \times g7$ \mp
Gerusel-Miles, Bad Lauterburg
1977.

12 ... $\Delta fd7$

a) The game Szabó-Toran, Montilla
1975 (last round) concluded **12**
... $\Delta h5$ 13 Δcl $\Delta f6$ 14 $\Delta f4$ $\Delta h5$
15 Δcl $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

b) **12** ... $\Delta c4$ 13 $\text{Bc}c1$ $\text{Ba}a5$ 14
 $\text{Bb}b1$ $\text{Bab}8$ 15 $\Delta d2$ $\Delta \times b2!$ (15 ...
 $\Delta e5$ 16 $\Delta \times e5$ d6 17 $\text{Bc}c2$ $\text{Bfd}8$ 18
 $\Delta g2$ $\Delta h6$ 19 $\text{Bcd}1$ $\Delta d7$ 20 d6 c6
21 $\Delta c6 \pm$ Kraidman-Bellon,
Haifa Olympiad 1976) 16 $\Delta b3$
 $\text{Ba}a3!$ 17 $\text{B} \times b2$ $\text{B} \times b2$ 18 $\text{B} \times b2$ c4
19 $\Delta d2$ cb 20 $\text{B} \times b3$ $\text{B} \times b3$ 21 ab

$\text{Bb}b8$ 22 $\text{Bb}b1$ $\Delta e8$. It is difficult to
see how White can keep his extra
pawn. Analysis by Liberzon.

13 $\text{Bc}c1$

a) **13** **e4** $\Delta c4$ 14 $\text{Bc}c2$ $\Delta de5$ 15
 $\Delta \times e5$ $\Delta \times e5$ 16 $\Delta \times e5$ $\Delta \times e5$ 17
 Δfl $\text{Ba}a5$ 18 $\Delta \times a6$ $\text{B} \times a6$ 19 $\text{Bc}c2$
 $\text{Bb}b8$ ∞ Williams-Day, Haifa
Olympiad 1976.

b) **13** $\text{Bc}c1$ $\Delta c4$ 14 b3 $\Delta ce5$ (14 ...
 $\Delta a3!?$) 15 $\Delta \times e5$ $\Delta \times e5$ 16 $\text{Bd}d2$
 $\Delta c8$ 17 $\Delta g2$ $\text{Bc}c8$ 18 h3 $\text{Bb}b6$ 19
 $\text{Bc}c2$ $\Delta f5$ 20 $\Delta c4$ $\text{Bcb}8$ 21 g4 ∞
Rec-Hjertenes, Haifa Olympiad
1976.

13 ... $\Delta b7$

14 e4 $\Delta c4$

15 $\Delta h6!$

Szabó-Bellon, Montilla 1975
went 15 $\Delta \times d7$ $\text{B} \times d7$ 16 b3 $\Delta a3$
17 $\Delta h6$ $\Delta c2!$ \mp .

15 ... $\Delta de5$

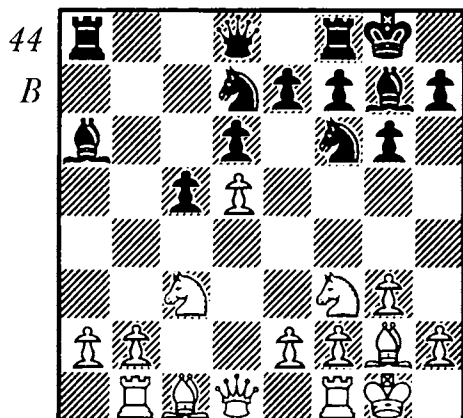
15 ... $\Delta \times h6$ 16 $\text{B} \times h6 \pm$
 $\Delta \times b2??$ 17 $\Delta \times d7$ followed by 18
 $\Delta g5 \pm \pm$.

16 $\Delta \times e5$ $\Delta \times e5$

17 $\Delta \times g7$ $\Delta f3+$

18 $\text{Bh}h1 \pm$

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 g3 g6 8 ♙g2
♙g7 9 ♘f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♘bd7 11
♖b1 (44)



White tries to consolidate his Q-side, defending the b-pawn and removing his rook from the a1-h8 diagonal in preparation for an eventual b3. Black's most natural plan is to put pressure on the a-pawn which is now not so well protected.

11 ... ♙a5

a) **11 ... ♙b6** 12 ♙c2 transposes to chapter 11 and 12 h3 to chapter 13, but not 12 ♙d2? ♙c4 13 b3 ♙×d5 14 ♘×d5 ♘×d5 15 ♙g5 e6, when

Black has won back the pawn (♙). G. Johansson–Westerinen, Dresden 1969.

b) **11 ... ♙c7** 12 ♙c2 transposes to chapter 11, 12 ♙e1 to chapter 12 and 12 h3 to chapter 13.

c) **11 ... ♘e8?! 12 ♙d2 ♘b6 13 b3 ♘c7 14 ♘h4 ♙b7** (14 ... f5!?) 15 e4 ♙×c3?! (15 ... ♙a6 16 ♙e1 c4∞–Benko) 16 ♙×c3 ♙×a2 17 ♙c1 ♘b5 18 ♙b2± Mukhin–Georgadze, USSR 1972.

d) **11 ... ♘b6** 12 b3 ♘e8 13 ♙b2 (13 ♙d2 transposes to (c) above) 13 ... ♘c7 14 h3 ♙d7 15 ♙d2 ♙a7 16 ♙fe1 ♘b5 17 ♘×b5 ♙×b5 18 ♙×g7 ♙×g7 19 a4 ♙e8 20 e4± Pytel–Bielczyk, Polish Ch 1975.

12 a3

White attempts to reduce the pressure on his a-pawn.

a) **12 ♙c2** transposes to chapter 11.

b) **12 ♙d2 ♙fb8 13 ♙c2** transposes to the Hasin–Berezin game in chapter 11.

c) **12 b3?! ♘e8!** (12 ... ♙×c3?! 13 ♙d2 ♙×e2 14 ♙×e2 ♙c2 15

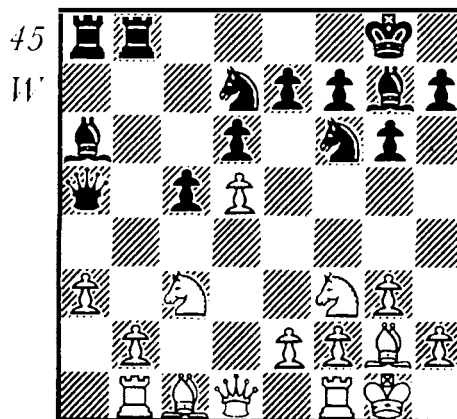
♙×e7±) 13 ♘a4 ♕b5! 14 ♕g5
 ♕×a4 15 ba ♘ef6 16 ♖b7 ♙a6! 17
 ♖b3 (17 ♖c7 ♙b6 18 ♖c6 ♙a5
 followed by 19 ... ♘b8 or 19 ...
 ♖fb8; 17 ♙b1 ♖fb8 18 ♖×b8
 ♖×b8 19 ♙c2 ♖b4) 17 ... ♙×a4
 18 ♕h3 h6 19 ♕×f6 ♘×f6 20 ♖b7
 ♖fc8 ♢ Meinsohn–Ghizdavu,
 France–Romania match 1973.

12 ... ♖fb8 (45)

13 ♕d2

a) **13 ♘d2?!** ♖a7 14 ♘a2 ♙c7 15
 b4?! ♕b5 16 ♘c3 cb 17 ♘×b5
 ♖×b5 18 ♖×b4 ♖×b4 19 ab
 ♖a2= Barandregt–Bukal, Zagreb
 1971.

b) **13 ♖e1** transposes to the
 Laver–Benko game in chapter 12.



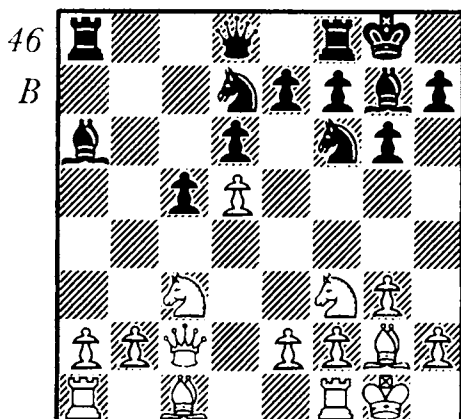
13 ... ♘g4

14 ♙c2 ♘4e5

15 ♘×c5 ♘×e5∞

Akvist–Eskilsson, Sweden 1969,
 continued 16 b4? cb 17 ab ♙c7 18
 ♖fc1 ♘c4 19 ♖b3 ♘×d2 20
 ♙×d2 ♙c4 21 ♖cb1 ♖c8 ♢.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙xa6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 g3 g6 8 ♙g2
♙g7 9 ♘f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♘bd7 11
♔c2 (46)



The main line. White defends b2 with the queen and vacates the d1 square for the f1 rook. Up to now Black has tried:

A 11 ... ♔c7

B 11 ... ♔b6 and

C 11 ... ♔a5

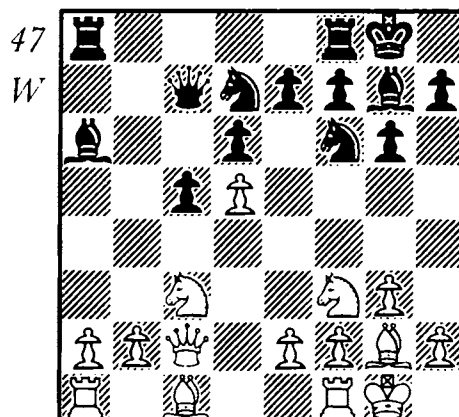
11 ... ♘g4 12 ♙e1 ♔a5 transposes to variation C.

11 ... ♘b6 has yet to be tested.

A.

11 ... ♔c7 (47)

This is the least energetic of the



three queen moves but that does not necessarily mean it is the weakest. On c7 the black queen does not obstruct the d7 knight (as it does on b6) nor is it open to attack from White's ♙d2 (as it is on a5). Nevertheless, it usually results in positions in which Black's counterplay is just a little too slow.

12 ♙d1

a) 12 ♙b1 ♔b7 transposes to variation B, while an interesting alternative is 12 ... ♘b6!? 13 ♘d2 ♙ae8 14 ♙d1 e6 15 de fe 16 ♘de4 ♘fd5∞ Quinteros-Szabó, Vin-
kovci 1970.

b) 12 ♙g5 transposes to chapter 14.

c) 12 ♙e1 transposes to chapter 12.

12 ... ♖fb8

12... ♖b6 13 e4 ♖ae8 (playing for ... e6, just as in Quinteros-Szabó) 14 ♖b1 e6 15 de ♖×e6 16 ♖g5 ♖e7 17 ♖f4 ♖e8 18 a4 ♖×c3! 19 bc ♖c4∞ Averkin-Bronstein, Odessa 1974.

13 h3

13 ♖b1 is also good for White, e.g.:

a) **13... ♖g4** 14 ♖d2 ♖c8 15 b3 ♖a5 16 a4 ♖d8 17 h3 ♖f6 18 ♖e1 ♖e8 19 ♖b5 ♖a6 20 ♖a3 ♖b6 21 e4± Averbakh-Popov, Polanica Zdroj 1975. Whenever White can play b3 and a4 in safety he has a big advantage.

b) **13... ♖b4** 14 ♖d2 (not 14 b3 c4!) 14... ♖c8 15 ♖e1 ♖a7 16 a3 ♖d4? (16... ♖bb8 17 b3±) 17 ♖b5!±± (17... ♖×b5 18 ♖×d4) Bukić-Bellon, Pula 1975.

13 ... ♖b6

14 e4

a) **14 ♖b1** ♖c4! = -Hort.

b) **14 ♖d2** ♖fd7 15 ♖b1 ♖c8?! (better 15... ♖e5, threatening... c4 and ... ♖d3) 16 b3 ♖a5 17 ♖b2± Korchnoi-Gurgenidze, 24th USSR Ch 1957.

14 ... ♖fd7

15 ♖b1 ♖c4?!

Better is 15... c4!?-Hort.

16 b3! ♖a5

16... ♖ce5 17 ♖×e5 ♖×e5?! 18 ♖c3!± (instead, Hort-Calvo, Las Palmas 1973 went 18 ♖d2?! ♖d4! 19 ♖c1 ♖a7 20 a4 ♖c5 21

♖f1 ♖f3+ 22 ♖g2 ♖×f1+ 23 ♖×f1, when 23... ♖×e1 24 ♖×e1 ♖×c3 25 ♖×c3 ♖b4 would have offered roughly equal chances).

17 bc ♖×c3

18 ♖×c3 ♖×c3

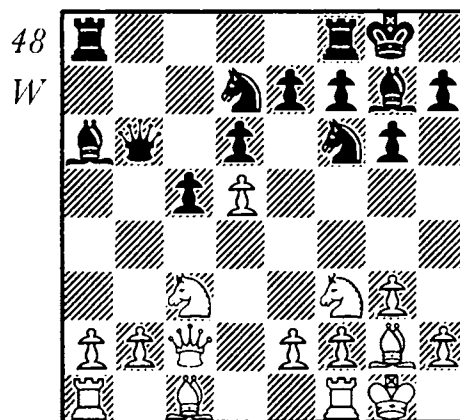
19 ♖d2

± according to Hort.

19 ... ♖f6

20 ♖f1 ♖c8±

according to Benko.

B**11 ... ♖b6** (48)

Here Black's queen exerts pressure along the b-file but it gets in the way of the d7 knight.

B1 12 ♖b1

B2 12 ♖d1

B3 12 ♖c1

B4 12 h3

B1**12 ♖b1** ♖b7

Increasing the pressure on d5 while still keeping an eye on b2. The text also clears the way for ... ♖b6 in some lines.

a) **12... ♖c4?** 13 ♖d2 ♖a6 (only now did Black realise that 13... ♖×a2 loses to 14 ♖a1) 14 b3 ♖fb8 15 ♖b2±± Szily-Földy, Budapest 1973. Black cannot afford to squander two tempi.

b) **12... ♖fb8** 13 b3 ♖e8 (13... ♖g4 14 ♖b2 c4?! was played in Cooper-Biriescu, Teesside 1973, and now Kotov suggests 15 bc ♖×c4 16 ♖a1±) 14 ♖d2 (14 ♖d2 ♖c7 15 ♖fd1 ♖b5 16 ♖×b5 ♖×b5 17 ♖f4 ♖a3∞ Forintos-Milhailjčisin, Debrecen 1969) 14... ♖a5? 15 ♖b2 c4 16 ♖fc1 ♖e5 17 ♖a1± Korchnoi-Quinteros, Leningrad Interzonal 1973.

13 ♖g5

13 ♖d1 ♖c4! (now this move works because Black's queen attacks d5) 14 b3 (or 14 ♖d2 ♖×a2 15 ♖a1 ♖×d5±±) 14... ♖×d5 15 ♖×d5 ♖×d5±.

13... ♖b6

13... ♖c4 is now very risky because of 14 ♖d2 ♖×a2 15 ♖a1 ♖×d5 16 ♖×d5 ♖×d5 17 ♖×e7.

14 ♖×f6

If 14 ♖fd1 ♖c4 or 14 ♖f×d5.

14... ♖×f6

15 ♖fd1 ♖×c3!

16 bc

16 ♖×c3 is also met by 16... ♖c4, winning back the pawn.

16... ♖c4

17 ♖b2 ♖a6

18 ♖e4 ♖a4

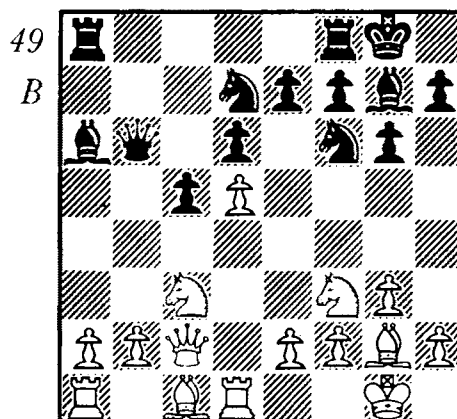
19 ♖db1 ♖×d5!

Weak is 19... ♖×d5 20 ♖d2 ♖×a2 21 ♖a1 ♖×c3 22 ♖e3 ♖d4 23 ♖×d4 cd 24 ♖×a8 ♖×a8 25 ♖e4 ♖×e4 26 ♖b×a2± O. Jakobsen-Westerinen, Lidköping 1969.

20 ♖×e7 ♖c4± Benko

B2

12 ♖d1 (49)



12... ♖fb8

13 h3

13 ♖b1 and now:

a1) **13... ♖e8** 14 ♖g5 ♖d8 15 ♖f1 h6 16 ♖d2 ♖c7 17 b3 ♖b6 18 e4 ♖×f1 19 ♖×f1 ♖d7 20 ♖e1 ♖h7 21 ♖g2 e6 = Vukić-Benko, Sarajevo 1967 (for the complete game score see chapter 1, page 13).

a2) **13... ♖e8** 14 ♖d2 ♖c7 15 h3 ♖b5 16 ♖c4 ♖a7 17 ♖×b5 ♖×b5 18 ♖a3 ♖a6 19 b3 ♖b7 20 ♖b2 ♖f6 21 e3 ♖b4 22 ♖c4 ♖×c4 23 ♖×f6 ♖×f6 24 bc ♖a5 = Csom-Gligorić, Ljubljana 1973.

b) **13... ♖g4** 14 ♖d2 ♖ge5 (or 14

... c4 15 ♘e1 ♗c5 =
Marović-Udovčić, Yugoslav Ch
1962) 15 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 16 b3 ♘c8
17 h3 ♖a6 18 f4 ♗d7 19 e3 ♖a3∞
Vukić-Djukić, Sarajevo 1973.

13 ... ♗c8

14 e4

14 ♖e4?! ♖d8 15 ♖c2 ♗c7 16
e4 ♗b5 17 ♘g5 ♗d4⌘ Shul-
Gaprindashvili, ½-final USSR
Armed Forces Ch 1975 (I regret
that I cannot state exactly in which
branch of the armed forces World
Champion Nona Gaprindashvili
fights).

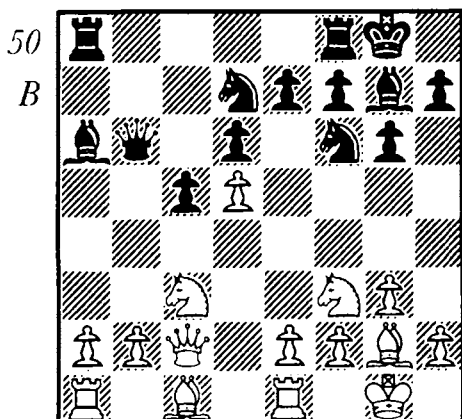
14 ... ♗c7

15 ♖c1 ♗b5∞

Marović-Mihailjićšin, Čateske
Toplice 1967.

B3

12 ♖e1 (50)



12 ... ♖fb8

12 ... ♗g4 13 h3 ♗ge5 14
♗xc5 ♘xc5 (14 ... ♗xc5 is
better) 15 ♖h2 ♖fb8 16 ♖b1 ♘d4
17 e3 ♘f6 18 f4± Böhnisch-
Manetta, Bad Berleburg 1975.

13 ♘h3

Preventing ... ♗g4 and putting
the bishop on a more active
diagonal. This idea has already
been encountered in chapter 9.

13 h3 ♗e8 14 e4 ♖b4?! (better
14 ... ♗c7) 15 ♗d1 ♗e5 16 ♘d2
♖c4! 17 ♘c3 (Bokor-Bilek,
Budapest 1965) 17 ... ♖d3! 18
♖xd3 ♗xd3⌘ – Benko

13 ... ♖b4

An interesting idea is 13 ... h5!?
followed by ... ♗g4.

14 e4 ♘c4

15 e5 de

16 ♗xc5 ♗xc5

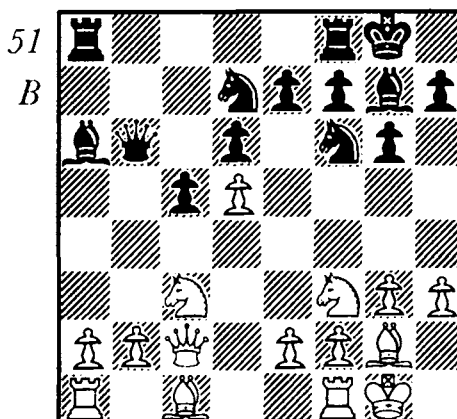
17 ♖xc5

Faragó-Bilek, Budapest 1964.

17 ... ♖a7∞

B4

12 h3 (51)



12 ... ♖fb8

12 ... ♖b7 13 ♖d1 ♘c4?! 14
♗d2 ♗b6 15 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 16
♘f1± Csom-Sax, Hungarian Ch
1971.

13 ♖c1

13 ♖b1 should be met by 13... ♖b7 as in variation B1, but not 13... ♕c4? 14 ♘d2 ♕a6 15 b3± Gulbrandsen-Åkvist, Eskjö 1975. It is amazing how easy it is to overlook this loss of two tempi.

13... ♘e8

14 h4

Attempting to take advantage of the fact that Black's knights are wandering towards the Q-side.

14... ♘c7

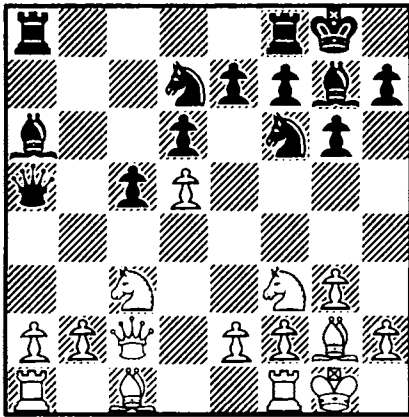
15 h5 ♘f6

Black's K-side is quite secure and his Q-side attack is about to commence. Filep-Mihailjčisin, Debrecen 1967.

C

11... ♖a5 (52)

52
W



The most popular move and the most active. Benko points out that on a5 the black queen is more exposed than on b6 or c7, and that if White plays ♕d2 Black must be on the lookout for discovered attacks unleashed by the c3 knight, but since c3 is the best

square for the knight (unless White is allowed the luxury of a4 and ♘b5) Black does not have very much to fear. The same is true of many other Benko Gambit positions in which Black's queen is on a5—the move ♕d2 rarely carries any threat.

White now has:

• C1 12 h3

• C2 12 ♕g5

• C3 12 ♖b1

• C4 12 ♖e1

• C5 12 ♖d1

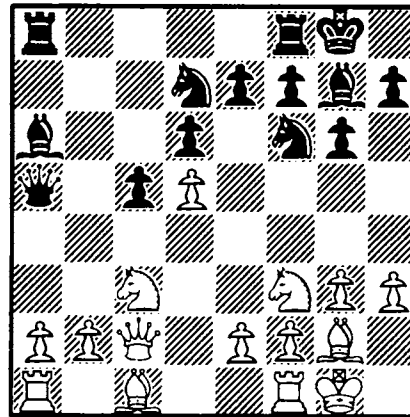
• C6 12 ♕d2 and

• C7 12 ♘d2

C1

12 h3 (53)

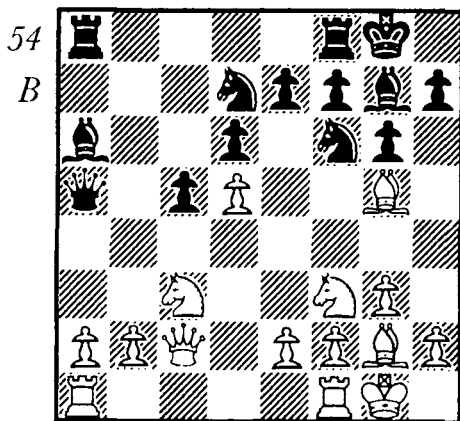
53
B



12... ♖fb8 13 ♖d1 ♘b6 14 ♘d2 ♕c4 15 e4 ♘e8 16 f4 ♕d4+ 17 ♖h2 ♘c7 18 a4 ♕xc3 19 ♘xc4 ♘xc4 20 bc ♘b5 21 ♕f1 ♖xc3 ♢ K. Grigorian-Tseshkovsky, Kishinev 1975.

C2

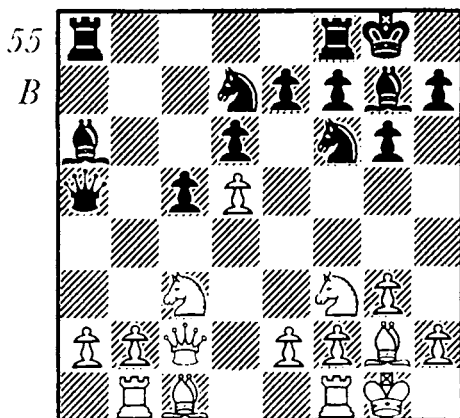
12 ♕g5 (54)



A pointless move when Black's knight has not yet moved from f6. 12 ... ♖fb8 13 ♖ab1 ♗b6 14 ♖fd1 h6 15 ♗d2 ♗c4 16 ♗e1 ♗e8 17 ♖c1 ♗c8 18 b3 ♗a3 19 ♖b2 ♗b5 20 ♖c2 ♗xc3 21 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 22 ♖xc3 ♖xa2 23 ♖xh6 ♖xb3 = Zheliandinov-Shereshevsky, USSR Armed Forces Ch Vilnius 1974.

C3

12 ♖b1 (55)



12 ... ♖fb8

a) 12 ... ♗g4 13 ♗g5 ♖fc8 14

♖d2 ♗de5 15 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 16 ♗h6 ♗c4 17 ♖c1 ♗h8 18 ♗h3 ♗xb2! 19 ♗e4 ♖xa2 20 ♗g5 ♗c8 21 ♖a1 ♖xa1 22 ♖f4 ♗f6 23 ♖xa1 ♖xa1+ ♠♠ Babev-Popov, Bulgarian Ch 1974.

b) Browne prefers 12 ... ♗b6 when 13 ♖d1 transposes to variation C5.

13 ♗d2

a) 13 ♖d1 ♗b6 is similar to the Padevski-Browne game in the text.

b) 13 ♖e1 h6!? (13 ... ♗g4 followed by ... ♗ge5 is also possible—the move ... h6 suggests that Black was lost for a decent plan) 14 ♗h3 ♗c4 15 ♗d2 (15 b3 ♗xd5 16 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 17 ♗xd7 ♗xf3 18 ♗d2 ♖c7 ♠) 15 ... ♗b6 16 ♗xc4 (16 e4 ♗c8) 16 ... ♗xc4 17 ♖d1 ♗c8 18 ♗d7 ♗xc3! 19 bc ♖xb1 20 ♖xb1 ♗f6 ♠ Podgayets-Peev, Varna 1972. It is most unusual for two knights to be so much better than two bishops.

13 ... ♗b6

a) 13 ... ♖c7 wastes time: 14 ♗g5 ♗b6 15 b3 ♖b7 16 ♖fd1 ♖a7 17 ♗e1 ♖a8 18 h3 ♗c8 19 a4 ♗c7 20 a5± Hasin-Berezin, ½-final Moscow Ch 1962.

b) 13 ... ♗e8 14 ♖fc1 ♗c7 15 b3 ♖a3 16 ♖c4 (Korelov Marmoshin, Burevestnik TU Ch 1972) and now 16 ... ♗e5!? ♠

c) 13 ... ♗g4 transposes to chapter 10 after 14 a3.

d) Browne prefers 13 ... ♖b7 or 13

... ♖a7 which do not allow White to force a draw.

14 b3 ♖a3

Otherwise comes 15 a4±

15 ♗cl

White must take the draw, otherwise he gets the inferior position. e.g. 15 ♗e1 ♗b7 16 e4 ♗fd7 followed by ... c4 or ... ♗a6. Analysis by Browne.

15 ... ♖a5

15... ♖b4 16 a3 ♖g4 17 h3 ♖d7 18 ♖d1 followed by e4± -Browne.

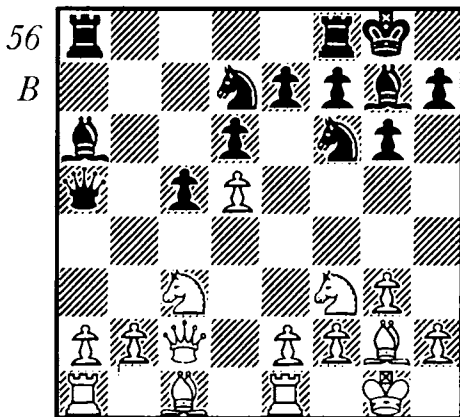
16 ♗d2 ♖a3

17 ♗cl ½-½

Padevski-Browne, Sarajevo 1970.

C4

12 ♖e1 (56)



12 ... ♖fb8

a) 12 ... ♗g4 13 ♗d2 ♖fb8 transposes to the text.

b) 12... ♗b6 13 e4? ♗fd7 14 ♗g5 ♖fe8 15 ♗d2 (15 ♗d2 ♗c4! or 15 ♖ad1 ♗c4 16 ♗cl ♗a3! -Benko)

15 ... ♗e5 16 ♗b3 ♗d3±
Lorinczi-Browne, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

13 ♗d2

13 ♗d2 ♗e8 14 ♗b3 ♖b4 15 ♗d2 ♗c7 16 a3 ♖a5 17 ♖b1 c4 18 ♗de4 (18 e4 ♗c5 and ... ♗d3) 18 ... ♗xd5 19 ♗d2 ♗xc3 20 ♗xc3 ♖a7± Haigh-Vogt, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

13 ... ♗g4

14 b3

There seems little point in playing h3 since Black intends 14 ... ♗ge5 anyway. The game Plachetka-Peev, Stary Smokovenc 1972, continued (14 h3 ♗ge5) 15 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 16 ♗d1 ♖b6 17 ♗c3 ♗c4 18 ♗xg7 ♖xg7 19 b3 ♖a5 20 ♖c3+ ♖xc3 21 ♗xc3 ♗a3 22 ♖ac1 c4 23 bc (23 ♗b1 ♗xb1 24 ♖xb1 cb) 23... ♗xc4 24 e4 ♖b2 25 ♗f1 ♗c2!! 26 ♖ed1 (26 ♗xc4 ♗xe1 27 ♖xe1 ♖c2) 26... ♗xf1 27 ♖d2 ♖c8!±±.

The text move makes better use of the tempo.

14 ... ♗ge5

15 ♗xe5 ♗xe5

16 ♖ab1 ♖a3

16... ♗c8?! 17 a4 ♗f5 18 ♗e4 ♗xe4 19 ♖xc4 f5 20 ♖c2±
Ree-Popov, Wijk aan Zee 1975.

Now Black threatens 17 ... c4.

17 ♗cl ♖a5

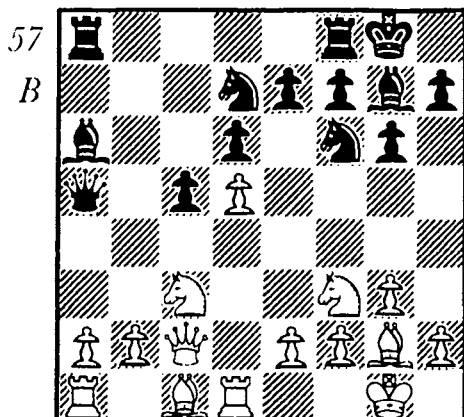
18 ♗d2=

18 a4 c4± or 18 a3 ♗f3+! 19 ♗xf3 (19 ef ♖xc3 20 ♖xc3

♙xc3 干干) 19 ... ♖xc3 20 ♖xc3 ♙xc3 21 ♖d1 c4 22 b4 ♙b5 干.

C5

12 ♖d1 (57)



The most natural follow-up to ♖c2 and the most popular move, especially after Hort employed it successfully against Benko at the 1974 US Open Championship.

12 ... ♗b6!

The most accurate move. It is interesting to note that Browne, a leading exponent of the Benko Gambit, usually prefers to play ... ♗b6 before moving his f rook to b8 because there is no easy way for White to prevent ... c4 or ... ♗c4. Also, if Black moves his f6 knight he will be able to answer ♙g5 with ... ♖fe8 without loss of time.

12 ... ♖fb8 has been the more popular choice up to now:

a) **13 ♙d2** ♗c8 14 ♙h3 (preventing ... c4 followed by ... ♗c5) 14 ... ♙c8 (14 ... ♗b6 15 b3 or 15 a4! and the b6 knight is

virtually useless) 15 ♙e1 ♗c7 16 e3 c4 (16 ... ♖a6?! 17 ♙f1 ♖b7 18 ♖ab1 ♗b6 19 e4 ♙g4 20 ♙c2± Hort-Benko, US Open Ch 1974) 17 ♗d4 ♙xd4 18 ♖xd4 ♗c5 (or 18 ... ♗b6) and (1) 'Black has compensation for the minor exchange'-Benko; (2) 'White is always better'-Hort.

b) **13 e4?! ♗g4** 14 ♙d2 c4! 干 15 ♗b1 ♖xb2! 干 White should always beware of ... c4 and ... ♗d3 as a possible response to e4.

c) **13 h3** ♗e8 14 ♙d2 ♗c7 15 ♙f1 ♖b6 16 ♙c1 ♗b5 17 ♗xb5 ♙xb5 18 a4?! ♙a6 19 a5? ♖d8 20 ♖a2 ♙b7 21 c4 ♖xa5 干 Zhukovitsky-Dzhindzhishvili, ½-final 37th USSR Ch 1969. It is all very well to advance the passed a-pawn but if it cannot be supported it will soon be lost.

d) **13 ♖b1** (when Black cannot reply ... ♖b7 this move might work. cf variation B1) 13 ... ♖a7 14 ♙d2 ♗c8 15 ♙h3 ♖d8 16 b3 ♗c7 17 a4 ♖ab7 18 c4 ♗c5 19 ♗xc5 ♙xc5 20 ♗a2± Forintos-Anikayev, Sochi 1974. White has been allowed to establish the (almost winning) formation on b3 and a4.

13 ♖b1

a) **13 b3?? ♗fxd5 干干.**

b) **13 ♗d2** c4∞.

13 ... ♗c4

By adopting the most precise order of moves Black has succeeded

in establishing this knight on its ideal square before White has had time for b3.

14 ♖d2 ♖d7

15 ♗h3?!

The knight is heading for b6 in any event and White's bishop is needed on the long diagonal in order to support the d-pawn. Better was 15 ♖xc4 ♗xc4∞.

15 ... ♖db6

16 a3 ♖xd2

17 b4? ♖xb1!

18 ♖xb1

18 ba ♖xc3 19 ab ♖xd1 20 ♖xd1 ♗fb8±.

18 ... ♖xd5

19 ♖xd5 cb

20 ab ♖d8

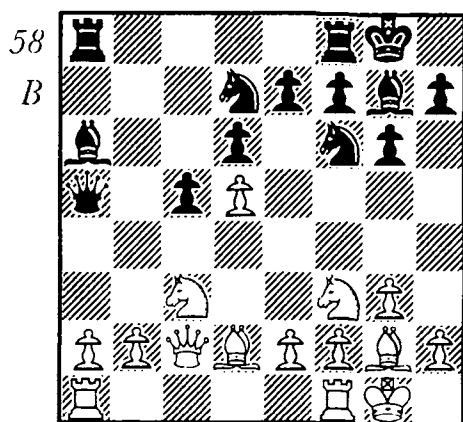
21 ♗g5 ♗c8

22 b5 ♗b7±±

Forintos-Browne, Skopje 1970.

C6

12 ♗d2 (58)



The most direct way to try to embarrass the black queen.

12 ... ♗fb8

13 ♗ab1

13 ♗fb1 is an artificial attempt to support both Q-side pawns. White will soon discover that his a1 rook is severely restricted: 13 ... ♖g4 14 h3 ♖ge5 15 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 16 b3 ♖a3 17 ♗c1 ♖a5 18 ♗b2 (White can play for the draw by 18 ♗d2 but Black can try for more with 18 ... c4) 18 ... c4 19 ♖e4 (hoping to find time for f4 followed by exchanging bishops) 19 ... ♖xa2!! 20 ♖c1! (20 ♗xa2 cb 21 ♖d1 ba±±). So far we have been following the game L. Grigorian-Platonov, USSR 1974, and now 20 ... ♖xb3!±.

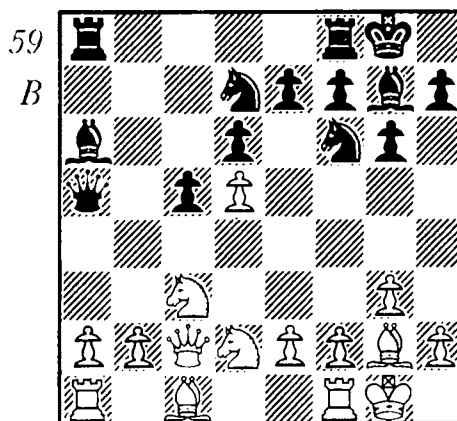
13 ... ♖b6

We have transposed to variation C3.

Instead, Ivkov-Miles, Novi Sad 1975, went 13 ... ♖c7 (losing a tempo) 14 ♗f1!? ♗c4! 15 b3 ♗xd5 16 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 17 ♖e1± but White was unable to make use of his advantage and Black eventually got the upper hand.

C7

12 ♖d2 (59)



12 ... ♖fb8

Also satisfactory is 12... ♖e8 13 ♖b3 ♖c7 14 ♖g5 ♖e5 15 ♖ad1 ♖f6 16 ♖fe1 ♖fb8 17 ♖c1 ♖fd7 18 h3 ♖c4 ♖ Segal-Benko, Sao Paulo 1973.

13 h3 ♖e8

14 a3?! ♖c7

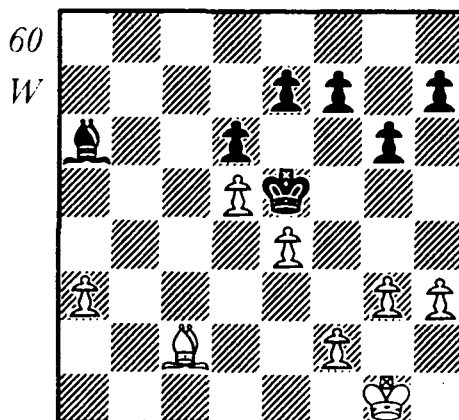
15 ♖e1 ♖b5

16 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 ♖

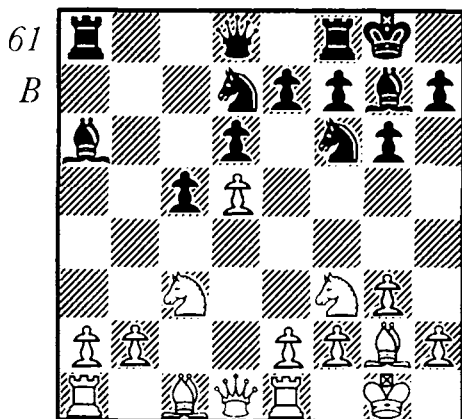
Gavrilov-Lomaya, USSR 1972, continued 17 ♖b1 c4 18 ♖f3 ♖c5 19 ♖e3 ♖a4 20 ♖xa4 ♖xa4 21 ♖d4 ♖d7 22 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 23 ♖d2 ♖xb2 24 ♖ec1 ♖b5 25 ♖c3 ♖c8 26 ♖bc1 ♖b7 27 ♖f1 ♖b5 28 ♖b1 ♖a6 29 e4 ♖f6 30 ♖c2 ♖cb8 31 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 32 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 33 ♖xc4 ♖c7 34 ♖d3 ♖xc2 35 ♖xc2 ♖e5 (60)

Black is a pawn down but because of his well placed king he has a distinct advantage (possibly even a forced win). 36 f3 ♖d4 37 ♖f2 ♖b5 38 a4 ♖d7 39 ♖c2 ♖c3 40 ♖d1 (40 ♖d1 ♖xh3 41 a5 ♖f1) 40... ♖b4 41 ♖d3 (after 41 g4 g5

and 42... ♖xa4 43 ♖xa4 ♖xa4 the pawn ending is a win for Black) 41... ♖xh3 42 g4 ♖f1+ 43 ♖e3 f6 44 f4 h6 45 ♖d4 ♖a6 46 e5 ♖f1 47 ♖c2 ♖e2 48 ef ef 49 g5 hg 50 fg fg 51 ♖xg6 ♖xa4 52 ♖e4 ♖b4 53 ♖f7 ♖c4 54 ♖f5 g4 55 ♖f4 ♖d4 56 ♖e6 ♖f3 57 ♖g3 ♖e5 58 ♖xg4 (58 ♖g8 ♖xd5 etc.) 58... ♖xg4 0-1. A supreme example of the rule that Benko Gambit endings become more favourable for Black as more pieces are exchanged. White's pawn structure is always ripe for invasion by Black's king via g7, f6 and c5.



1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙xa6 6 ♜c3 d6 7 g3 g6 8 ♙g2
♙g7 9 ♜f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♜bd7 11
♖e1 (61)



White releases himself from the pin on the e-pawn and prepares the advance e4. This will give Black the opportunity to capitalize on the vulnerability of the d3 square by manoeuvring one of his knights there, and the presence of light squared bishops on the board will help Black in this respect since his a6 bishop supports d3 while White's g2 bishop does not.

A 11 ... ♗b6

B 11 ... ♗a5

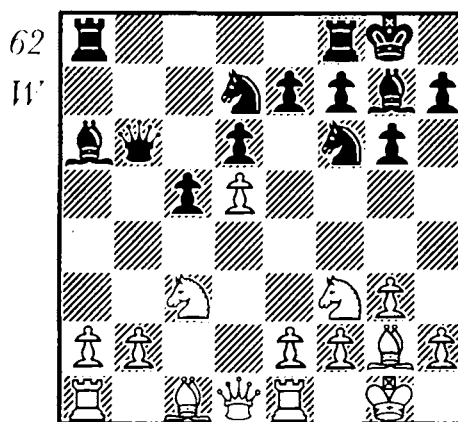
C 11 ... ♗c7

D 11 ... ♜b6

11 ... ♜e8 is too slow: 12 e4 ♜c7 13 ♙f4 ♗b8 (this position can also arise via the move order 11 ... ♗b8 12 e4 ♜e8 13 ♙f4 ♜c7) 14 ♗c1 ♜b5 15 ♙h3! ♜b6 16 ♜xb5 ♙xb5 17 ♙h6± Pfleger–Rogoff, Haifa 1970.

A

11 ... ♗b6 (62)



12 h3

a) 12 ♗c2 transposes to chapter 11.

b) 12 ♖b1 ♖fb8 13 h3 ♜e8 14 ♙d2 (14 ♗c2 ♜c7 transposes to the text) 14 ... ♜c7 15 b3 ♜f6 16

♟h2 ♜b7 17 c4 e6 18 de ♟×e6∞
Liebert–Mihailjčišin, Dresden
1969.

c) **12 e4?** ♟g4 (en route for d3 via
e5) and now:

c1) **13 ♖c2** ♜fb8 14 h3 (14 b3 c4!
or 14 ♜b1 c4!, in each case
threatening both ... ♜×c3 and
... ♖×f2+) 14... ♟ge5 15 ♟×e5
♟×e5 16 b3? (16 ♜d1 was forced)
16 ... ♟d3 17 ♜d1 c4! ♢
Aspler–Benko, Vancouver 1971.

c2) **13 h3** ♟ge5 14 ♟a4 ♖b7 15
♜e3 ♟×f3+ 16 ♜×f3 ♜b5 17
♟c3 ♜c4 18 ♜f1 ♜×f1 19 ♖×f1
♜fb8 20 ♟d1 ♜d4 21 a4 ♟e5 ♢
Karlsson–Åkvist, Sweden 1970.

12 ... ♜fb8

12 ... ♟e8 13 ♖c2 ♟c7 14 e4?
♜fb8 transposes to the next note.

13 ♖c2

13 e4? ♟e8! 14 ♖c2 ♟c7 15
♜b1. (15 ♜g5 h6! 16 ♜×e7 ♟e8!
and the bishop has no moves) 15
... ♟b5 16 ♟×b5 (16 ♜d2 ♟d4
17 ♖d1 ♟×f3+ 18 ♜×f3 ♟e5 ♢)
16... ♜×b5 17 ♜e3 (17 ♜f4 ♖a6
18 ♜e3 ♖×a2 19 e5 ♜a6 20 ♜b1
♟f8 ♢ Fernandez–Donner,
Havana 1971) 17 ... ♜×a2 18
♜a3 ♜×a3 19 ba ♖a6 20 ♟d2
♜d4! ♢ Thorbergsson–Gheorghiu,
Reykjavik 1972.

13 ... ♟e8

14 ♜b1 ♟c7

15 ♜g5! ♜f8

a) **15 ... h6** 16 ♜×e7 ♜e8 17 ♜h4
g5 18 ♜×g5 hg 19 ♟×g5∞

Probably four pawns are worth
more than the piece in this position.

b) **15 ... ♜e8** (if this is Black's best
move then 15 ♜g5! is overwhelm-
ing) 16 ♖d2 ♜c4 17 a3 ♖b3 18 e4
♟e5 19 ♟×e5 ♜×e5 20 ♜f4 ♜d4
21 ♜e3 ♜g7 22 e5 ♜ab8 23 ♜f4 ±
Szabó–Kozomara, Sarajevo 1963.

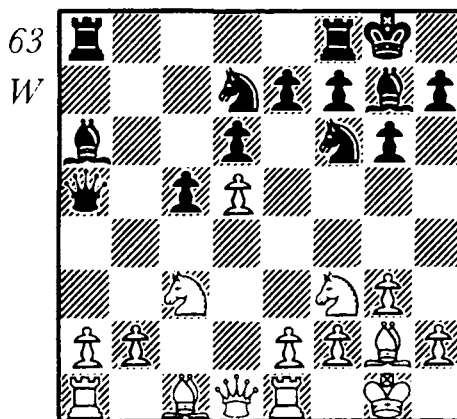
c) **15 ... ♟b5** 16 ♜×e7!? f6 17 e4
♜f7 18 e5 ♜×e7 19 ef+ + ♜×f6 20
♟g5 gives White a strong attack for
the piece.

16 ♖d2 ♟b5
17 ♜h6 ♟×c3
18 ♖×c3 ♟f6
19 ♜×g7+ ♜×g7
20 e4 ♖b4
21 ♖×b4 ♜×b4
22 e5 ±

K. Grigorian–Georgadze, 40th
USSR Ch 1972.

B

11 ... ♖a5 (63)



12 ♜b1

a) **12 ♖c2** transposes to chapter 11.

b) **12 ♜d2** ♜fb8 13 ♖c2 ♖b6 14
♜b1 (both sides have lost a tempo,
White with ♜e1 and ♜b1, Black

with ... ♖a5 and ... ♖b6) 14... ♖b7 15 e4 ♖g4 16 ♖d1 ♖a6 17 ♖c3 ♖ge5 18 ♖e1 c4 19 ♖d2 ♖c5 20 ♖c2 ♖c7 21 ♖b4 ♖b5 22 ♖e3 ♖a4 ♖ Johannessen-Åkvist, Oslo 1974.

c) **12h3** ♖fb8 13 e4 (13 ♖c2?! ♖c4! 14 ♖d2 ♖b6 15 e4 ♖fd7 16 f4 ♖d4+ 17 ♖h2 ♖xc3 18 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 19 bc ♖a3 20 ♖xa3 ♖xa3 21 ♖e2 c4 22 ♖d2 ♖c5 ♖ Doroshkevich-Kozlov, RSFSR Ch 1973) 13... ♖e8 14 ♖c2 ♖c7 15 ♖fl ♖xfl 16 ♖xfl ♖b5 17 ♖xb5 ♖xb5+ 18 ♖g2 ♖a4 19 b3 ♖xa1 20 bxa4 ♖a6 ♖ Whiteley-Webb, Hastings 1976/77.

d) **12 e4?! ♖g4!** 13 h3 ♖ge5 14 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 15 ♖fl ♖fb8 16 ♖xa6 ♖xa6 17 ♖g2 ♖d3 ♖ Mista-Spiridonov, Cienfuegos 1972.

e) **12a3** ♖fb8 13 ♖b1 transposes to the text.

12... ♖fb8

13 a3

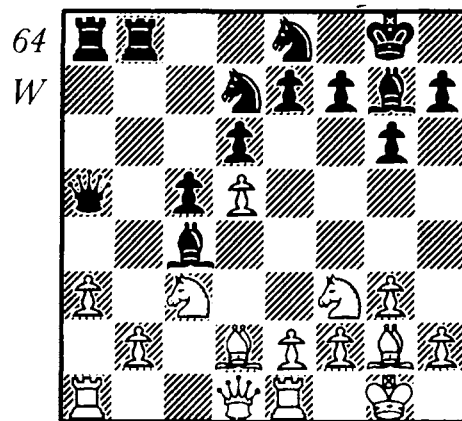
13 ♖d2 ♖d8 14 b3 ♖e8 15 ♖c2 ♖a7 16 h4 ♖ef6 17 ♖bd1 ♖c7 18 ♖f4 h5 19 ♖c1 ♖ab7 with considerable pressure for the pawn. Villaroel-Benko, Caracas 1970.

13... ♖e8

Also good is 13... ♖g4 14 ♖d2 ♖c4 (14... ♖b6 15 h3 ♖ge5 16 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 17 b3 ♖b7 18 ♖c2 ♖ab8 19 ♖e4 ♖a7 20 ♖c3± Burger-Evans, US Open Ch 1971) 15 ♖c1 ♖gf6 16 ♖h6 ♖h8 17

♖d2 ♖a6 18 h3 c4= Shipov-Volovich, Burevestnik TU Ch 1965.

14 ♖d2 ♖c4! (64)



In return for the pawn Black has good play on the Q-side light squares in addition to the normal Benko Gambit counterplay.

15 h3 ♖a6

16 ♖h2

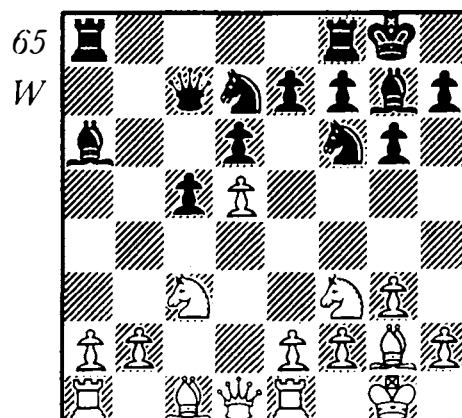
Laver-Benko, American Open Ch 1967.

16... ♖b3! ♖

After Black doubles or triples on the b-file White faces a long rearguard action.

C

11... ♖c7 (65)



12 ♖b1

a) **12 ♖d2** ♖b6 13 ♖f4 ♖fb8 (better 13 ... ♖c4!) 14 b3 ♖g4 15 ♖d2 ♖c8 16 h3 ♖e5 17 ♖×e5 ♖×e5 18 ♖b1 = Spassky-Szabó, Göteborg 1971.

b) **12 e4?** ♖g4 13 ♖f1 ♖×f1 14 ♖×f1 ♖fb8 15 ♖e2 ♖b7 16 ♖d2 ♖g6 17 ♖c4 ♖a6 18 ♖e1 ♖b4 ♖ Röhrl-Toran, Clare Benedict 1970.

c) **12 h3** ♖b6 13 e4 (13 ♖b1 transposes to note (b) in chapter 13) 13 ... ♖fd7 14 ♖c2 ♖c4! $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ Szabó-Toran, Kapfenberg 1970.

d) **12 ♖c2** ♖fb8 13 ♖f1? (13 h3) 13 ... ♖c8 14 e4 ♖g4 15 ♖×a6 ♖×a6 16 ♖f4 ♖ge5 17 ♖×e5 ♖×e5 18 ♖×e5 ♖×e5 ♖ Trikalotis-Toran, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

12 ... ♖fb8

13 b3

13 h3? ♖g4! (the very move that 13 h3 was designed to prevent) 14 ♖c2 ♖ge5 15 ♖×e5 ♖×e5 16 b3 c4! 17 b4 ♖d3! ♖ O. Rodriguez-Bellon, Torremolinos 1975.

13 ... ♖g4

14 ♖c2 ♖a7

White is a tempo up on the previous note and this deprives Black of Bellon's tactical resource.

15 h3 ♖ge5

16 ♖×e5 ♖×e5

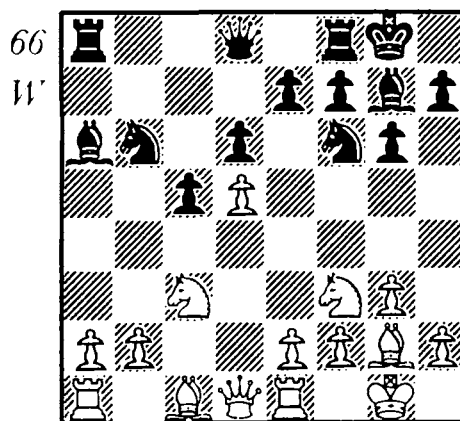
17 ♖d2 ±

I. Szabo-Vogt, Sary Smokovenc 1972, continued 17 ... ♖ab7

18 ♖e4 ♖b5 19 ♖c3 c4 20 b4 ♖a8 21 ♖b2 ♖ba7 22 ♖a1 ♖a3 23 ♖ec1 ♖a7 24 ♖c2 h6 25 ♖f1 (threat 26 f4) 25 ... f5 26 ♖d2 ♖c8 27 ♖b1 ♖d3 28 ed cd 29 ♖×a3 dc 30 ♖×b5 ♖×c3 31 ♖×c3 ♖d4 32 ♖×c2 ♖×c3 33 ♖d1 1-0.

D

11 ... ♖b6 (66)



The text is more accurate than 12 ... ♖c7 since the black queen can later go to b6 or a5 in one move, thereby saving a tempo.

12 e4

12 ♖d2 ♖c7 13 ♖f1 ♖g4 14 ♖c2 ♖c4 15 h3 ♖ge5 16 ♖d1 ♖a5 17 a3 ♖fb8 18 ♖a2 ♖b6 19 f4 ♖d7 20 ♖h2 ♖b3 21 ♖e4 ♖×c2 22 ♖×c2 ♖×b2 23 ♖×b2 ♖c4 ♖ Averkin-Alburt, Odessa 1974.

12 ... ♖fd7

13 ♖c2 ♖c4

13 ... ♖c7 (a wasted move) 14 b3 c4?! 15 ♖b2 ♖fc8 (15 ... cb was more consistent) 16 b4 ♖e5 17

♗×e5 ♕×e5 18 a4± Wester-
inen–Lundwall, Dieren 1970.

14 ♖d1

14 b3? ♗a5±.

14 . . . ♗a5

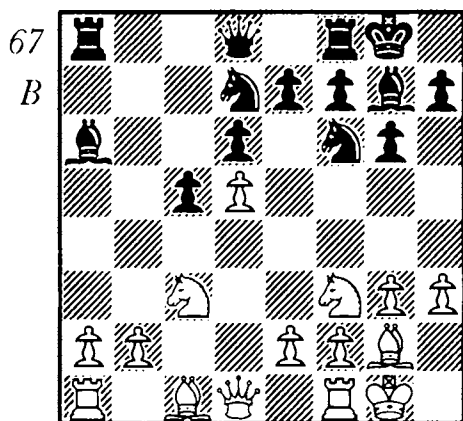
15 ♗d2 ♗a3!

16 ba ♗×c3

17 ♗×c3 ♕×c3

White's extra pawn is of no real value whereas Black's c-pawn soon becomes quite dangerous. Averkin–Miles, Dubna 1976, continued
18 ♖b1 c4 19 ♗f3 ♖fb8 20 ♕e3 ♕b2 21 ♗d4 c3 22 ♕f1 ♗e5±.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 g3 g6 8 ♙g2
♙g7 9 ♘f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♘bd7 11 h3
(67)



As in chapter 6 the move h3 is designed to prevent the manoeuvre ... ♘g4 followed by ... ♘ge5. Most games in which 12 h3 is played transpose to one of the other chapters in this section (chapters 10–14) but a few lines have an independent significance.

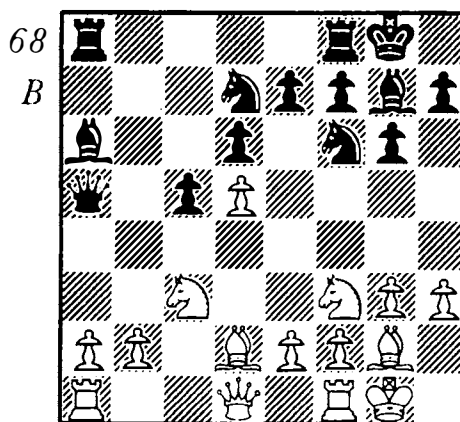
11 ... ♙a5

a) **11 ... ♘b6** 12 ♖b1 ♙c4 13 ♘d2 ♙×a2 14 ♘×a2 ♖×a2 15 e4 ♘fd7 16 b3 ♙a8 17 ♙f3 ♖b8 18 ♙e2 (it is a sad reflection on the

fianchetto variation if White must redeploy his bishop in this way) 18 ... ♙c3 19 ♘c4 ♘×c4 20 ♙×c4 ♘e5 21 ♙g5 ♙a7 22 ♙f4 ♘×c4 23 b×c4 ♙d4± Estevez-Vasyukov, Cienfuegos 1975.

b) **11 ... ♙c7** (probably too slow) 12 ♖b1 ♘b6 13 h3 ♖fb8 14 ♙b2 ♖a7 15 ♖c1 ♖ab7 16 ♘d2 ♘bd7 17 a3 ♙a5 18 ♙c2± Popov-Markland, Nice Olympiad 1974.

c) **11 ... ♙b6** 12 ♖b1 (12 ♙c2 transposes to chapter 11 and 12 ♖c1 to chapter 13) 12 ... ♖fb8 13 ♙c2 ♘e8 14 ♖c1 ♙c4 15 b3 ♙×c3 16 ♙×c3 ♙×d5 17 ♙b2 f6 18 ♘e5! ♙×g2 19 ♘×d7 ♙b7 20 ♘×b8 ♙×h3 21 ♙f3 ♖×b8 22



g4 ± Vladimirov–Tseitlin, Lenin-
grad Spartakiad 1974.

12 ♖d2 (68)

12 ♖e1 transposes to chapter 12.

12 . . . ♖fb8

13 ♖c2 ♗e8

14 ♖fe1 ♗c7

15 h4!? ♗b5

16 ♗×b5 ♖×b5

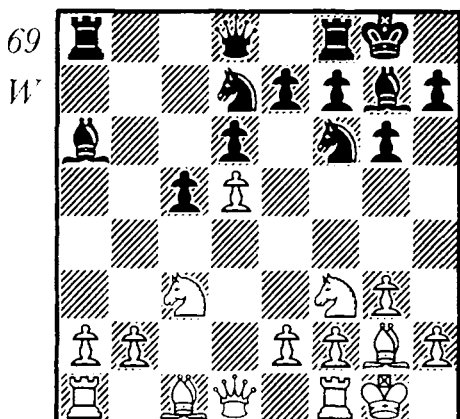
17 ♖c3 ♖×c3

18 bc ♖b2∞

Sosonko–Levy, Haifa Olympiad
1976, concluded 19 ♖c4 ♗f8 20
♖c3 ♗f6 21 ♗g5 ♖c8 22 h5 ♖f5
23 a4 gh 24 ♗e4 ♗g4 $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$. The
position is still extremely unclear.

14 Other 11th Moves for White

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 g3 g6 8 ♙g2
♙g7 9 ♘f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♘bd7 (69)



Apart from the logical 11th moves already discussed in the five previous chapters two other possibilities have been tried:

11 ♙f4 and

11 ♙g5

Both of these moves suffer from the defect that they leave White's b2 pawn unprotected and from the scanty evidence at our disposal it would seem that Black can quickly get the upper hand.

Note that 11 ♘d2 ♙a5 12 ♙c2 transposes to chapter 11.

A

11 ♙f4 ♙a5

11 ... ♙b6 also seems quite strong, e.g. 12 ♙c2 ♙fb8 13 ♙ab1, and now both 13 ... ♘c8 followed by ... ♘c7 etc., and 13 ... ♘g4 followed by ... ♘ge5 are perfectly viable plans for Black.

12 ♙c2 ♙fb8

13 h3?

Better is 13 b3 and if 13 ... c4? 14 ♘d4! ± Black should meet 13 b3 with 13 ... ♘c8 and ... ♘c7 b5.

13 ... ♙×b2!

A thematic sacrificial idea.

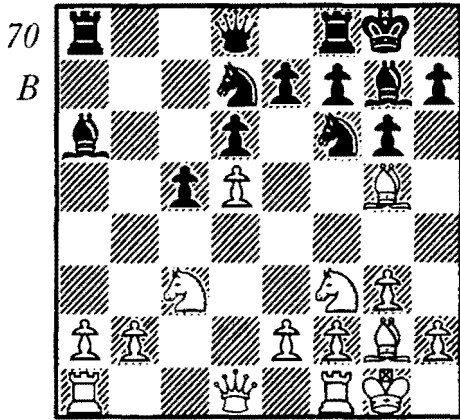
14 ♙×b2 ♘c4

15 ♙c2 ♘×c3 ±

Giustolisi-Primavera, Italy 1976, concluded 16 ♙d2 ♘×c2+ 17 ♙h2 ♙a3! 18 ♙e4 ♘e5! 19 ♘×e5 ♙×e5 20 ♙ae1 ♘×g3! 21 fg ♙×g3+ 22 ♙g1 ♙h2+ 23 ♙f2 ♙×f1 24 ♙×f1 ♙×a2 25 ♙c3 ♙g3 26 ♙b1 ♙×g2 27 ♙b8+ ♙g7 28 ♙×g2 ♙×e3 0-1.

B

11 ♙g5 (70)



So far as I am aware this move has only been played in the blitz game Uddenfeldt-Green, Stockholm 1970. White hopes to tie down the f6 knight by means of the latent threat to e7 but it is not absolutely clear that White can always capture on c7 without getting his bishop trapped by ... f6 and ... ♔f7.

11 ... ♔c7

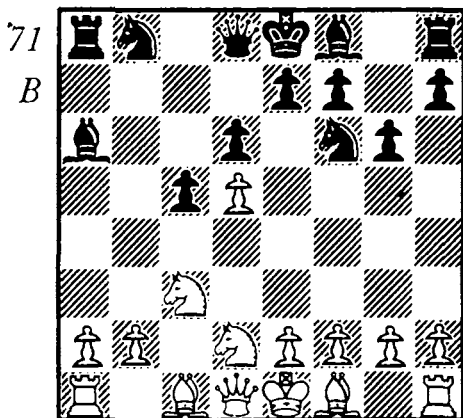
a) 11 ... ♔b6 12 ♔c2 ♖fb8 13 ♖ab1 ♜e8 14 ♖fel leads to a position similar to that in chapter 12, page 66 (which is \pm) in which White has played ♖fel instead of the defensive h3.

b) 11 ... h6! 12 ♙d2 (12 ♙f4 ♔a5 is similar to A, the move ... h6 being relatively unimportant) 12 ... ♔b6 13 ♔c2 ♖fb8 14 ♖ab1 ♔b7 is variation B1, page 56, in which Black has played an extra ... h6.

12 ♔c2	♖fb8
13 b3	♜b6
14 ♖ad1	e6
15 ♙d2	♜b×d5
16 ♜×d5	♜×d5 ♞

Uddenfeldt-Green, Blitz game, Stockholm 1970.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5
ba ♙×a6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 ♘f3 g6 8
♘d2 (71)



White delays e4 until he is in a position to recapture on f1 with the knight. He then plays ♘e3 and 0-0, thereby avoiding the loss of time and slight weakening of his K-side pawn structure that are implicit in castling by hand.

For a while this strategy was quite successful in master praxis but it is now known that Black can achieve a perfectly satisfactory position in more ways than one.

A 8 ... ♙a5

B 8 ... ♙g7

C 8 ... ♘bd7

A

8 ... ♙a5

This is the move recommended by Benko who prefers it to ... ♙g7 and ... ♘bd7 because it interferes with White's plan (9 e4 ♙×f1 10 ♘×f1?? ♘×e4 ♢). White must therefore choose between reverting to the time consuming plan of 9 e4 ♙×f1 10 ♙×f1 followed by castling by hand, and continuing with his original intention by supporting the e4 square so that after e4, ... ♙×f1 *can* be met by ♘×f1.

A1 9 f3

A2 9 e4

Other possibilities are:

a) An interesting but untested move is **9 a3** with the idea of ♙b1 and b4.

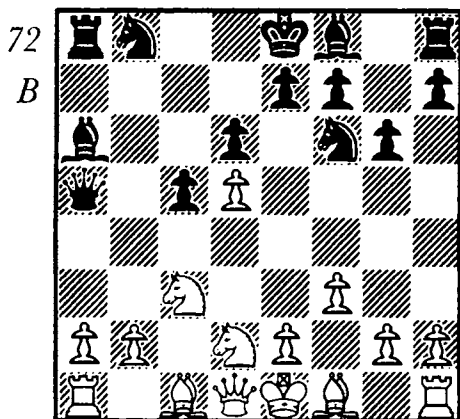
b) **9 g3** will transpose either to chapter 11 by 9 ... ♘bd7 10 ♙g2 ♙g7 11 0-0, or to chapter 7 by 9 ... ♙g7 10 e4 ♙×f1 11 ♙×f1 0-0 12 ♙g2, or to chapter 9 by 9 ... ♙g7 10 ♙h3.

c) **9 ♙c2** ♙g7 10 g3 (10 e4 ♙×f1 11 ♘×f1?? ♘×e4 ♢) 10 ... 0-0,

transposes as in (b) according to whether White plays 11 ♖g2, 11 ♖h3 or 11 e4 ♖×f1 12 ♖×f1.

A1

9 f3 (72)



A rather artificial attempt to maintain a pawn on e4 at the cost of weakening White's king position.

9 ... ♖g7

The most natural move and one which secures Black full equality, but possibly more accurate is 9 ... ♖bd7 10 e4 ♖e5, aiming to take advantage of the awkward position of the d2 knight. The idea is that 11 ♖×a6? ♖×a6 will be followed by ... ♖d3+ with extremely unpleasant consequences for White. The game Walter-Schöneberg, East Germany 1973, continued 11 ♖b3 ♖b6 12 ♖e3 (otherwise Black plays ... ♖×f1 followed by ... c4 and ... ♖d3) 12 ... ♖×f1 13 ♖×f1 ♖c4 14 ♖c1 ♖g7 15 ♖e2 ♖b4 16 ♖f2 ♖d7 17 ♖d1 0-0 18 ♖g1 ♖fb8 19 ♖h1 ♖a4 20 ♖c3 ♖×c3 21 bc ♖×b3

22 ab ♖×a1 23 bc? ♖×c3 24 ♖b2 ♖b3 25 e5 ♖a2 26 e6 ♖×b2 27 ed ♖×e2 28 d8 ♖+ ♖g7 29 h3 ♖×c4 30 ♖b1 ♖×d5 0-1. A most convincing refutation of 9 f3.

10 e4 ♖×f1

In Gorshkov-Shereshevsky, USSR Armed Forces Ch 1974, Black played 10 ... 0-0 and White found the amazing move 11 f4. Obviously if White wastes time in this way he must expect his king to run into trouble in the centre, though in the game Black was unable to take full advantage of the situation: 11 ... ♖×f1 12 ♖×f1 ♖fd7 (preventing 13 ♖f2 which is met by ... ♖d4+) 13 ♖f3 ♖a6 14 ♖e2 ♖b4 15 ♖c4 ♖a6 16 g4?! e6 (this central break is a natural reaction to White's wing attack but Black has better in 16 ... ♖b6 and if 17 ♖e3 c4, followed by ... ♖d3+) 17 ♖e3 ♖×e2+ 18 ♖×e2 ed 19 ed ♖fe8 20 ♖d2 ♖d4. In comparison with similar positions in which ... e6 and ... ed have not been played, Black is a little worse off because of the vulnerability of his d-pawn. The chances are approximately equal.

11 ♖×f1 ♖fd7

12 ♖d2 ♖b6

13 ♖e3 ♖8d7

14 0-0

So White has achieved his aim, castling naturally.

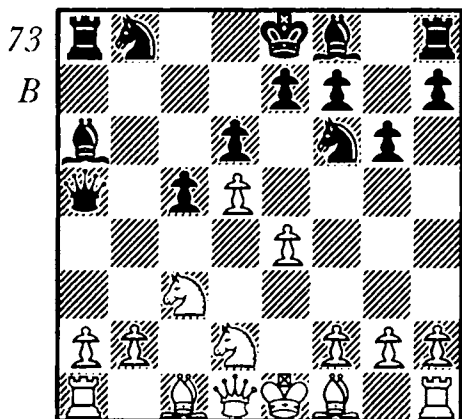
14 ... c4!

15 ♖c2 0-0
 16 ♙d2 ♜fc8
 17 ♘cd1 ♖c5

17 ... ♖a6 (or even ... ♖a7) comes into serious consideration, intending ... ♘c5 followed by ... ♘d3 or ... ♘b3.

18 ♙c3 ♘e5
 19 a4 ♙h6
 20 ♙d2 c3
 21 ♖xc3 ♘xa4
 22 ♖xc5 ♘xc5
 23 ♜xa8 ♜xa8

Black stands no worse. Gerusel-Knaak, Leipzig 1975.

A2**9 e4 (73)**

White abandons his original intention. If 9 e3 ♙xf1 10 ♘xf1, White *will* be able to castle naturally but only at the cost of another tempo when he plays e4. Ungureanu-Peev, Lublin 1972, continued 10 ... ♘bd7 11 ♘g3 (another disadvantage of 9 e3—the f1 knight cannot come to e3) 11 ...

♙g7 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♙d2 ♜fb8 14 b3 c4 15 bc ♖c7 16 ♜b1 ♖xc4 ♢.

9 ... ♙xf1

10 ♖xf1 ♖a6+

10 ... ♙g7 and now:

a) **11 ♘c4** is possibly the most accurate move, preventing ♖a6+.

b) **11 g3** ♘bd7 (11 ... ♖a6+ should be met by 12 ♖g2 and not 12 ♖e2 ♖xe2+ when g3 turns out to be a wasted tempo) 12 ♘c4 (12 ♖g2 transposes to chapter 7, page 40) 12 ... ♖a6 13 ♖e2 0-0 14 ♖g2 ♜fb8 15 ♙d2 ♘b6 (also possible is 15 ... ♘e8) 16 b3 ♘fd7 (16 ... ♘xc4 17 bc ♜b2 18 ♜ab1 ♢, but not 18 ♖d3? ♘g4 ♢ nor 18 a3 ♘d7 19 ♘b5 ♖a4 20 ♜ab1 ♖c2 21 ♜xb2 ♙xb2 ♢ ♢ Vokřalova-E. Bilek, Balatonszeplak 1971) 17 ♘xb6 ♜xb6 18 ♖xa6 ♜bxa6 19 a4 c4 20 bxc4 ♘b6 21 ♜hb1 ♘xc4 22 ♙el ♘e5 23 ♜a2 ♘d3 = Marsalek-Wach, Wistla 1971.

c) **11 ♖e2** ♘bd7 12 ♘c4 ♖b4 13 ♙d2 (13 g3 ♘b6 14 ♘xb6 ♖xb6 15 ♖g2 0-0 transposes to chapter 7, page 40) 13 ... 0-0 14 g3 ♘b6 15 b3 ♘xc4 ∞ Skalkotas-Peev, Plovdiv 1973.

11 ♖e2 ♖xe2+

12 ♖xe2 ♙g7

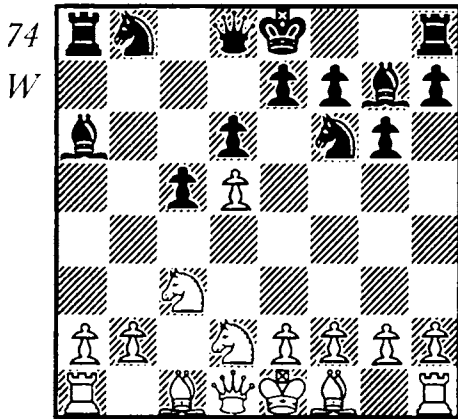
13 ♘c4

If Black now plays 13 ... ♘bd7 he transposes to the Kazilaris-Beyen game on page 77. Another

possibility is 13 ... ♖a6, followed by ... 0-0, ... ♖fb8 and either ... ♖c7-b5 or ... ♖b4.

B

8 ... ♖g7 (74)



9 e4

B1 9 ... ♖×f1!

B2 9 ... 0-0

9 ... ♖a5 10 ♖×a6 ♖×a6
11 ♖e2 0-0?! (11 ... ♖×e2+ ∞)
12 ♖b5 ♖bd7 13 a4± Kuzmin-
Stein, ½-final 40th USSR Ch 1970.

B1

9 ... ♖×f1!

In my opinion this is definitely stronger than 9 ... 0-0 which is Benko's preference. Black keeps the initiative for much longer in this variation.

10 ♖×f1 0-0

10 ... ♖a5 11 ♖d2 (11 ♖d2 transposes to the text after 11 ... 0-0 12 ♖e3, or Black can play 11 ... ♖a6!? 12 ♖c2 0-0 13 ♖e3 ♖bd7 14 ♖×a6 ♖×a6∞ Toth-Földi, Budapest 1972) and now:

a) 11 ... ♖a6 12 ♖e2 ♖×e2+ 13 ♖×e2 ♖bd7 14 ♖c4± Kazilaris-Beyen, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

b) 11 ... ♖fd7 12 ♖c2 ♖a6 13 a4 0-0 14 ♖b5 ♖b7 15 ♖c4 ♖a6 16 0-0 ♖b4 (16 ... ♖c7!?) 17 ♖b3 f5!∞ Kraidman-Damjanović, Netanya 1973.

c) 11 ... 0-0 12 0-0 ♖bd7 (12 ... ♖fd7 13 ♖e2 ♖×c3! 14 ♖b3 ♖a6 15 ♖×a6 ♖×a6 16 bc ♖c7± Romm-Damjanović, Netanya 1973) 13 ♖c4 ♖a6 14 ♖e2 ♖fb8 15 ♖d2 (15 ♖e1 ♖b4 16 ♖a3± but ½-½ O'Kelly-Damjanović, Montilla 1972) 15 ... ♖b6 transposes to the Vokřalova-E. Bilek game on page 76.

11 ♖e3 ♖bd7

a) 11 ... ♖a5 12 0-0 ♖bd7 transposes to the text.

b) 11 ... ♖a6 12 0-0 ♖d7 (12 ... e6?! 13 de fe 14 e5!, destroying Black's centre-Benko) 13 ♖e2 ♖c7 14 ♖d2 ♖b7 15 ♖ab1 ♖c7 16 b3 e6! (16 ... ♖fb8 17 a4, preventing ... ♖b5) 17 a4 ♖fe8 18 ♖c4 ♖a6 19 ♖f3 ♖e5 20 ♖×e5 ♖×e5 21 ♖fd1 ♖ab8 22 ♖f4 ed 23 ed ♖b4 24 ♖×e5 ♖×e5 = Taimanov-Benko, Wijk aan Zee 1970. This was the first game in which 8 ♖d2 was played.

12 0-0 ♖a5

a) 12 ... ♖c7 13 ♖d2 ♖fb8 14 ♖c2 ♖b7 15 b3 ♖e8 16 ♖ab1 ♖c7 17 a4 (preventing ... ♖b5) ±

Najdorf-S. Garcia, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

b) **12 ... ♖b6** 13 ♖c2 (13 ♖b1 ♖b4!? 14 a3 ♖d4 15 ♖c2 ♖c4 16 ♖e3 ♖d4 $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ Doroshkevich-Spassky, USSR Team Ch 1971. Benko suggests 17 ♖c2 in order to force Black's hand.) 13 ... ♖fb8 14 ♖b1 ♖e8 and now:

b1) **15 b3** ♖xc3! (15 ... ♖c7 16 ♖c4 ♖a6 17 a4± Karasev-Platonov, 39th USSR Ch 1971) 16 ♖xc3 ♖xa2 = -Benko.

b2) **15 ♖d2** ♖c7∞ or 15 ... ♖e5∞ (but not 15 ... ♖a6?! 16 b3 ♖c7 17 a4± Bukić-Vukić, Yugoslav Ch 1972).

13 ♖d2

a) **13 ♖h1** ♖fb8 14 f4 (the wrong plan, as is usually the case with f4) 14 ... ♖b4 15 ♖c2 ♖a6 16 ♖d2 ♖xe4! 17 ♖xe4 ♖xb2 18 ♖c1 ♖d3 19 ♖c3 ♖e2±± Berrios-Onat, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

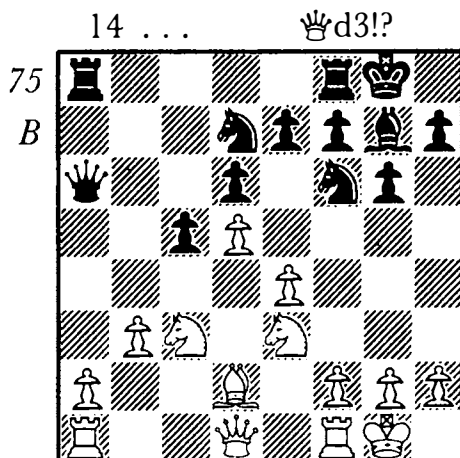
b) **13 ♖e2** ♖fb8 14 ♖fe1 ♖e8 15 ♖c4 ♖a6 16 ♖d2 ♖b6 17 ♖xb6 ♖xe2 18 ♖xe2 ♖xb6 19 ♖e1 ♖c7 20 ♖f1 e6! = Ghitescu-Mihailjčišin, Reggio Emilia 1970/71.

c) **13 ♖c2** ♖b6 14 ♖d2 ♖a6 15 b3 ♖fb8 16 a4 ♖e8 17 a5 ♖d7 18 ♖c4 ♖c7 19 ♖a4 e6 20 ♖d1 ♖a7 21 ♖e3 ed 22 ♖xd5 ♖b5 23 ♖cb6 ♖e5 24 b4 ♖d4 25 ♖a2 ♖g4 26 bc dc 27 ♖g5 ♖e2+ 0-1 Doda-Witkowski, Polish Ch 1970.

13 ... ♖a6

14 b3 (75)

The text is an improvement on 14 ♖c2 which can be effectively met by 14 ... c4! (stronger than the 14 ... ♖fb8 15 b3 ♖e8 16 ♖fb1 ♖c7 17 a4 ♖d4 18 ♖c4 ♖e5 19 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 20 ♖a2± of Brond-Rubinetti, Mar del Plata 1971) 15 ♖e2 ♖c5. The game Spassov-Tringov, Varna 1973, now continued 16 ♖g3 (if 16 ♖xc4 ♖xc4; or 16 ♖xc4 ♖fxe4 17 ♖xa6 ♖xa6 18 ♖c3 ♖xc3 19 ♖xc3 ♖xc3 20 bc ♖fa8∞. Benko suggests 16 f3 intending ♖d4 and ♖c6.) 16 ... ♖fc8 17 ♖c3 ♖a4 18 f3 (Benko suggests 18 b3, returning the pawn in order to simplify into a level ending. It is often difficult however for White to be objective in this type of position—after all, he is a pawn up so why not play for a win?) 18 ... ♖xc2 19 ♖xc2 ♖a4 20 ♖e2 (20 ♖d4 ♖d7 21 ♖xg7 ♖xg7 22 ♖fb1 ♖ab8±) 20 ... ♖xc3 21 bc ♖d7 22 ♖e3 ♖c5 23 ♖xc4 ♖a4 24 ♖e3 ♖xc3 25 ♖xc3 ♖xc3±



My own idea, first used in the game Vilela–Levy, Camaguey 1974. The plan is to interfere with the co-ordination of White's minor pieces, making it difficult for them to counter Black's coming Q-side attack.

15 ♖c2 ♖e5

Black does not fear the exchange of queens because his knight will be beautifully placed on d3.

16 ♖ab1 ♖fb8

17 f3 ♖e8

18 ♖fd1 ♖c7

19 ♖xd3 ♖xd3

20 ♖f1 ♖b7

21 g3!

Almost the only move. If 21 ♖e2? ♖f4+ followed by 22 ... ♖xc3 23 ♖xc3 ♖xa2+; or if 21 ♖c4? ♖b4 22 a4 ♖c2 and ... ♖d4.

21 ... ♖d4!

Preparing to eliminate the e3 knight. If 21 ... ♖b4 22 a4 ♖ab8 23 ♖c4 followed by ♖a5 and ♖c6.

22 ♖e2 ♖b4

23 a4 ♖xc3

24 ♖xe3 ♖c2

25 ♖b2 ♖a3! =

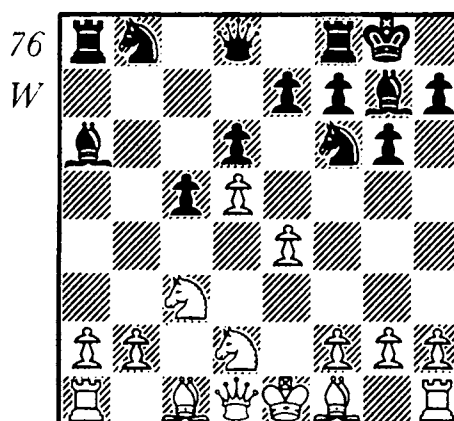
Vilela–Levy, Camaguey 1974 continued 26 ♖a1 ♖c4 27 ♖bb1 ♖xe3 28 ♖xe3 ♖ab8 29 ♖d3 ♖xb3 30 ♖xb3 ♖xb3 31 ♖b1! ♖xb1 32 ♖xb1 and an eventual draw. The knight ending is marginally better for White because of his outside passed pawn

but with careful play Black can hold the position.

B2

9 ...

0-0 (76)



I have an intense dislike for this move, largely as a result of an innovation of Donner's.

10 ♖xa6

The most popular move, but there seems little wrong with 10 ♖c4! Donner–Levy, Cienfuegos 1973, continued 10 ... ♖fd7 11 ♖c2 ♖b6 12 ♖c3! ♖xe2 (Benko suggests 12 ... ♖bd7, aiming for ... c4 and ... ♖c5 or ... ♖c5) 13 ♖xe2 ♖a4 14 ♖cd1 ♖a6 (Benko prefers 14 ... ♖d7) 15 0-0±. Even with one of Benko's improvements I feel that Black does not get sufficient counterplay for the pawn, and this reinforces my view that Black should capture on f1 whenever possible.

10 ♖e2 seems to me to be another good continuation. If Black captures on e2 the white queen will be quite well placed. Black can meet 10 ♖e2 with:

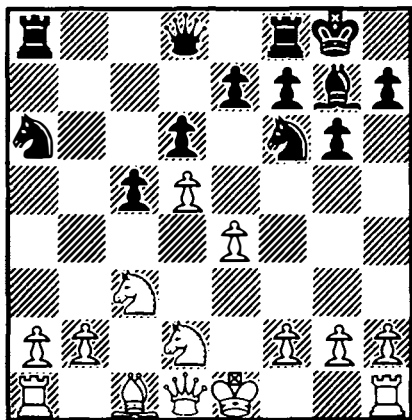
a) **10 ... e6?! 11 ♖×a6** (the lost tempo is justified by the opening up of the position) **11 ... ♗×a6 12 0-0** ed **13 ed ♜e8 14 ♗c4±** Toran-Benko, Malaga 1970.

b) **10 ... ♖a5 11 0-0 ♗fd7 12 ♗c4** (also possible is **12 ♗b3 ♖×e2 13 ♖×e2 ♖b6∞**, but not **12 ♖×a6?! ♗×a6 13 ♗c4 ♖b4±** Benko-Chellsthorp, US Open Ch 1971) **12 ... ♖×c4 13 ♖×c4 ♖×c3 14 bc ♖×c3 15 ♖b3 ♖×a1 16 ♖b2 ♖×f1+ 17 ♖×f1∞** Analysis by Benko.

10 ... ♗×a6 (77)

10 ... ♜×a6, intending ... ♗bd7 followed by ... ♖a8, is inferior because of **11 ♖e2**, preventing the execution of Black's plan. After **10 ... ♜×a6 11 0-0 ♗bd7 12 ♗c4**, if Black plays **12 ... ♗b6** instead of **12 ... ♖a8** he gets an unpleasant position: **13 ♗e3 ♖a8 14 a4 ♗fd7 15 ♖d2** (15 ♖c2 c4!) **15 ... ♖×c3** (possibly **15 ... c4** is still best) **16 ♖×c3 ♗×a4 17 ♖d3±** Pytel-Petersen, Århus 1971.

77
W



11 0-0 ♗d7

12 ♗c4

12 ♖e2 ♗b6 13 ♗f3?! ♗c7 was played in Ghitescu-Benko, Siegen Olympiad 1970. The move **13 ♗f3** seems to make little sense since e5 is never going to be a serious threat and the knight would be better suited to the task of staving off Black's Q-side attack. The game continued **14 ♜d1 ♗a4 15 ♗×a4 ♜×a4 16 b3!? ♖×a1** (16 ... ♜×e4 **17 ♖×e4 ♖×a1 18 ♖g5! ♖f6 19 ♖×f6 ef 20 b4±** -Benko) **17 ba ♖g7 18 ♖c2 ♖d7 19 ♖d2 ♜b8 20 ♖c4 ♖c8 21 ♖g5 ♜b4 22 ♖c2 ♜b2 23 ♖c4 ♜b4 ½-½** (If **23 ... f6 24 ♖d2! ♖a6 25 ♖×a6 ♗×a6 26 a3∞** -Benko).

12 ... ♗b6

The most logical continuation, driving away (or exchanging off) the c4 knight, but probably stronger is **12 ... ♗c7!?** and now:
a) **13 ♖e2 ♖b8 14 ♖d2 ♗b5 15 ♜fc1** (15 ♗×b5?! ♖×b5 **16 ♜fc1 ♜a4!±**) **15 ... ♗d4 16 ♖d3** (so far as in Doroshkevich-Georgadze, RSFSR-Georgia match 1972) **16 ... ♗e5! 17 ♗×e5 ♖×e5**, with an unclear position in which Black has the better prospects.

b) **13 a4 ♖b8 14 a5 ♗b5 15 ♗a4 ♗d4 16 ♖g5 ♜e8 17 ♗ab6 ♗×b6 18 ab ♖b7 19 ♜a3 ♜a6 20 ♖d2 ♜ea8 21 ♜fal ♗b3 22 ♜×a6 ♜×a6 23 ♜×a6 ♖×a6∞** Priednizheks-Boizhko, USSR 1972.

12 ... ♖b8 at once is, however, a mistake, because of 13 ♙g5. e.g. 13 ... ♜e8 14 ♜b1 ♞c7 15 ♖e2 h6 16 ♙d2 ♞b5 17 ♖d3 ♖b7 18 a4 ♞d4 19 b3± Popov–Gerusel, Dortmund 1973.

13 ♞e3! (78)

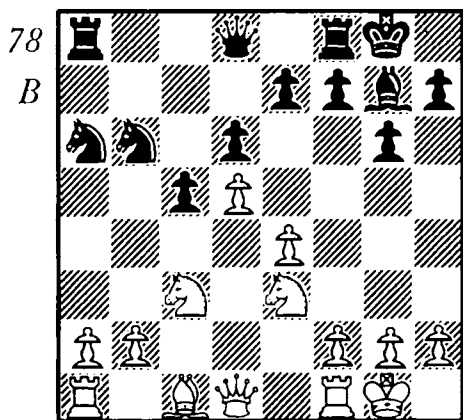
The only way to play for an advantage.

a) **13 ♞×b6?! ♖×b6** 14 ♖e2 ♜fb8 loses a tempo by bringing Black's queen into play on b6. It also helps Black by removing the b6 knight which only gets in the way of his attacking intentions along the b-file.

b) **13 ♖e2? ♞×c4** 14 ♖×c4 ♖b6 and now:

b1) **15 ♞a4? ♖b4** 16 ♖c2 (16 ♖×b4 ♞×b4 gives Black the better ending) 16 ... ♞c7 17 ♞c3 ♜fb8 18 a3 ♖c4!± Ivkov–Browne, Rovinj/Zagreb 1970.

b2) **15 ♞d1 ♞b4** 16 a3 ♖a6 17 ♞e3 ♞d3 18 ♜b1 ♜fb8 19 ♖c2 ♖b5 20 ♜d1 ♞f4 21 ♞c4 ♜a4±



Tatai–Browne, Malaga 1970.

After 13 ♞e3! Black does not find it easy to create sufficient Q-side counterplay because the semi-open a- and b-files are both obstructed by black knights.

13 ... c4!?

This move of Browne's is part of a thematic Benko Gambit plan, to restrain White's b-pawn and establish a knight on c5 (and eventually d3).

Three other moves have been tried in this position:

a) **13 ... ♖c7!? 14 ♙d2** (14 a4!?–Benko) 14 ... ♜fb8 15 ♖e2 c4! 16 ♜fc1 (16 a4!? ♞c5 17 a5 ♞bd7 18 ♞×c4 ♞b3 19 ♜ad1 ♞d4 20 ♖d3 ♞c5∞) 16 ... ♞c5 17 ♞×c4? (better 17 ♜ab1! ♙×c3!? 18 ♙×c3 ♞×e4 19 ♙d4 ♞f6 20 ♞×c4 ♞×c4 21 ♜×c4 ♖b7=; or Black can play 17 ... ♞d3∞) 17 ... ♞×c4 18 ♖×c4 ♜×b2 19 ♙c3 ♖b7± Soos–Jakobsen, Stockholm 1971/72.

b) **13 ... ♖c8** (heading for a6) 14 a4 ♞b4 15 ♜a3 ♖a6 16 ♞b5 ♖b7 17 ♖b3 (17 b3 is also good for White provided that he meets 17 ... f5 with 18 ef! gf 19 ♖h5± as in Doroshkevich–Georgadze, USSR 1972; and not 18 ♙d2?! fe 19 ♙×b4 cb 20 ♜a2 ♞d7= Popov–Toran, Kapfenberg 1970) 17 ... f5 (17 ... ♞×a4 18 ♞×d6 ed 19 ♜×a4 ♜×a4 20 ♖×a4 ♞d3

21 $\Delta c4 \pm$) 18 $\Delta d2$ f4 19 $\Delta d1$
 $\Delta \times a4$ 20 $\Delta \times a4$ $\Delta \times b5$ 21 $\Delta \times a8$
 $\Delta \times a8$ 22 $\Delta c3$ $\Delta d3$ 23 $\Delta \times f4$ $\Delta b8$
 24 $\Delta g5! \pm$ Vrancsic–Dicz del
 Corral, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

c) **13 ... $\Delta d7$** 14 a4 $\Delta fb8$ (14 ...
 $\Delta b7$ 15 $\Delta a3$ $\Delta fb8$ 16 h4!? $\Delta d7$ 17
 h5 should be met by Benko's
 suggestion of 17 ... $\Delta b6$ but not 17
 ... $\Delta f6?! \pm$ 18 hg hg 19 f4 \pm
 O'Kelly–Toran, Olot 1970) 15
 $\Delta a3$ (better 15 a5 $\Delta b4$ 16 $\Delta a3 \pm$)
 15 ... $\Delta d4$ 16 $\Delta e2$ $\Delta b7!$
 (maintaining the tension. 16 ...
 $\Delta \times c3$ 17 bc $\Delta \times a4$ 18 $\Delta d2$ $\Delta c7$
 offers Black virtually no winning
 chances) 17 $\Delta h1$ $\Delta c7$ 18 a5 $\Delta d7$
 19 $\Delta c4$ $\Delta a6 \mp$ 20 f4? $\Delta b4!$ 21
 $\Delta b6$ $\Delta \times e2$ 22 $\Delta \times e2$ $\Delta \times b6$ 23 ab
 $\Delta \times a3$ 24 ba $\Delta \times b6$ 25 $\Delta \times d4$ cd \mp
 Vrancsic–Benko, Toronto 1971
 continued 26 $\Delta g1$ (if 26 $\Delta d1$
 $\Delta b1 \mp$ or 26 $\Delta d2$ $\Delta b2$ 27 $\Delta b4$
 $\Delta a6 \mp$) 26 ... f5! (winning the
 d–pawn) 27 ef gf 28 $\Delta f2$ $\Delta \times d5$ 29
 $\Delta d1$ e5 30 $\Delta d3$ $\Delta f7$ 31 h3 h5 32 a4
 $\Delta b1$ 33 $\Delta d2$ $\Delta a1$ 34 a5 $\Delta f6$ 35
 $\Delta b4$ $\Delta a4$ 36 $\Delta b3$ $\Delta e4+$ 37 $\Delta e2$
 $\Delta e6$ 38 fe de 39 $\Delta e1$ $\Delta a2+$ 40
 $\Delta f3$ h4 41 $\Delta b6+$ $\Delta d7$ 42 $\Delta \times h4$
 $\Delta a3+$ 43 $\Delta e2$ d3+ 44 $\Delta e3$ d2+
 0–1. A model example of how Black
 should play a typical Benko Gambit
 ending.

14 $\Delta e2$ $\Delta c8$

15 $\Delta c2?! \pm$

Better is 15 $\Delta d2$ $\Delta b4 \infty$.

15 ... $\Delta c5$

16 $\Delta c3$ $\Delta ba4$

17 $\Delta d4$

The major disadvantage of ...
 c4 in the Benko Gambit is that
 Black concedes his opponent the d4
 square. As this game shows
 however, White can not always
 make real use of d4.

17 ... $\Delta \times c3$

18 bc3 $\Delta \times e4$

19 $\Delta c6$

The culmination of White's use
 of d4, but with the e–pawn gone
 White's d–pawn is vulnerable and
 without a d–pawn the knight would
 have no support.

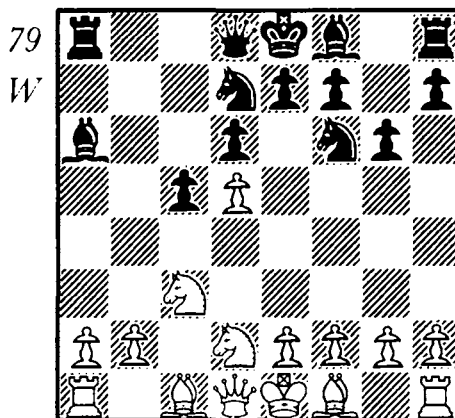
19 ... $\Delta \times c3$

20 $\Delta \times c4$ $\Delta d7 \mp$

Fitzgerald–Browne, Washington
 1970 continued 21 a4 $\Delta fc8$ 22
 $\Delta ac1$ (22 $\Delta fc1$ $\Delta \times d5$) 22 ... e6!
 (undermining the knight) 23 $\Delta \times c3$
 ed 24 $\Delta e7+$ $\Delta f8!$ 25 $\Delta \times c8+$
 $\Delta \times c8$ 26 $\Delta \times c8+$ $\Delta \times e7$ 27 $\Delta fc1$
 $\Delta \times a4 \mp$.

C

8 ... $\Delta bd7$ (79)



This move normally transposes to one of the lines discussed elsewhere in this volume.

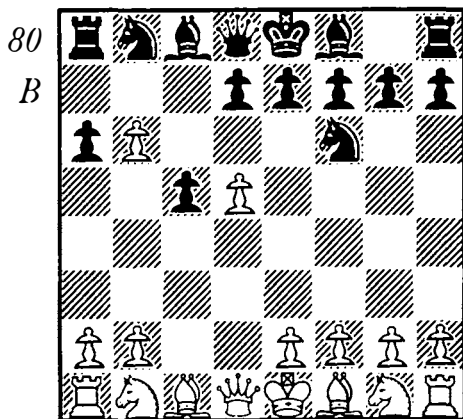
9 e4 ♖×f1
 a) 9 ... ♖a5 10 ♖×a6 ♖×a6 11 ♖e2 ♖g7 (11 ... ♖×e2+ 12 ♖×e2 ♖g7 13 ♖c4± transposes to Kazilaris–Beyen, also mentioned on page 77) 12 ♖×a6 (12 ♖b5 0–0 transposes to Kuzmin–Stein, page 77) 12 ... ♖×a6 13 ♖c4 0–0 14 f3 ♖b8 15 ♖d1 ♖b4 16 ♖e3 ♖e5 17 ♖c2± Toth–Bukal, La Spezia 1973.

b) 9 ... ♖g7 10 ♖×a6 ♖×a6 11 0–0 0–0 transposes to the Toth–Foldi game on page 77. Also, after 9 ... ♖g7 White can play 10 ♖e2 when 10 ... 0–0 11 0–0 ♖a5 leads to a position similar to that in B2, note to White’s 10th move, but with Black having played ... ♖bd7 instead of ... ♖fd7.

10 ♖×f1 ♖g7
 11 ♖e3 0–0

We have transposed to variation B1.

1 d4 ~~e~~f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb5 a6 5
b6 (80)



Black intends ... ♖bd7 whereupon he will be able to choose between capturing on b6 with the queen or the knight. The only disadvantage of delaying the capture is that White may play b7 at some stage, forcing Black to block the b-file by ♙×b7.

6 ♖c3 ♖bd7

7 ♖f3

a) **7 b7** ♙×b7 8 e4 transposes to the note to White's 8th move.

b) **7 e4** g6 8 ♙d3 ♙g7 9 ♖ge2 (this system of development is fine in the Modern Benoni but here White has no real attacking chances on the K-side) 9 ... 0-0 10 a4? ♙×b6 11 a5 ♙c7 12 0-0 ♖b8 13 ♖g3 c4! 14 ♙c2 ♖c5 15 ♙e2? ♖b7! ♖ Bagnoli-Bilek, Reggio Emilia 1964.

c) **7 g3** g6 8 ♙g2 ♙g7 9 ♖f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♙×b6 11 ♖e1 a5 12 h3 ♙a6 13 ♖b1 ♖fb8 14 ♙g5 ♙c7 15 ♙c2 a4 16 e4 a3 17 b3 ♖b4 ♖ Lombard-Pytel, Bath 1973.

7 ... g6

8 e4

8 g3 ♙g7 9 b6 transposes to chapter 22, variation I.

Interesting is **8 b7!?** temporarily (at least) blocking the b-file. If Black wishes to unblock the file at a later stage he must waste time by moving the bishop again: 8 ... ♙×b7 9 e4 ♙g7 10 ♙c2 0-0 11 0-0 ♙c7?! and now:

a) **12 ♙f4!** (preventing ... e6) 12 ... ♖ab8 (12 ... ♖fb8 might be better) 13 ♙d2 ♙c8 14 ♖fe1 ♙a5 15 ♖ab1 ♖b6 16 e5! ♖h5 17 ♙h6 ♙g4 18 ♙×g7 ♖×g7 19 ♖e4 ± Dzhindzhivashvili-Alburt, 40th USSR Championship, Baku 1972.
b) **12 ♙c2** ♖fe8 (better than 12 ... ♖ae8 because after ... e6 the a8 rook can better be used on d8, protecting the d-pawn). Black's plan is ... e6; dc ♖×e6.

8 ... ♙g7

9 ♙c2

9 ♖d2 ♙×b6 10 ♖c4 ♙c7 11 a4 0-0 12 a5 ♙b7 13 ♙e2 ♖ac8 14 0-0 ♖c5 15 ♖b6 c6 16 ♙e3 ♖ed7 17 ♖c4 cd 18 ed ♖e5 ∞ Mititclu-Nun, Dečín 1975.

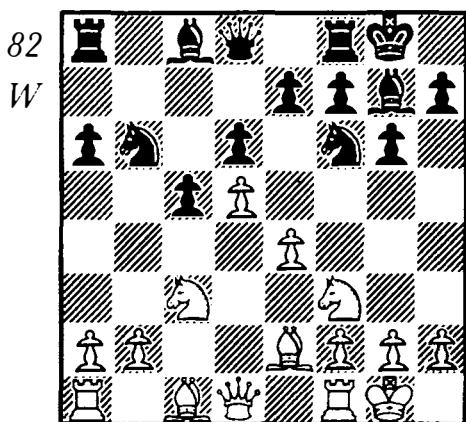
9 ... 0-0

10 0-0 ♖×b6 (82)

10 ... ♙×b6 appears to be less active and White can build up a powerful position in the centre by:

a) **11 h3** ♖b8 12 ♙c2 ♖e8 13 ♖b1 ♙c7 14 ♙f4 ♖b6 15 ♖fe1 ♙b7 16 ♖bd1 ♖bd8 17 a4 ♖bd7 18 ♙c4 ♖h5 19 ♙h2 ♖b6 20 ♙f1 c4 21 a5 ♖d7 22 ♙a4 ♖c8 23 g4! ± Terentiev-Foigel, Yalta 1976, but not:

b) **11 ♖d2** ♙c7 12 ♖c4, which plays into Black's hands by exchanging a pair of minor pieces. Saidy-Popov, Talinn 1973 continued 12 ... ♖b6 13 ♙g5 ♖×c4 14 ♙×c4 ♖e8 with roughly equal chances.



11 ♖f4
11 h3 e6 12 de ♖×e6 13 e5?! de
14 ♙×d8 ♜f×d8 15 ♘×e5
♘fd5! ♞ Balcerowski-Pytel,
Poland 1971.

11 ... ♖g4
12 ♘d2
12 h3 ♖×f3 13 ♖×f3 ♘fd7 14
♖e2 c4 followed by ... ♘c5=
Benko.

12 ... ♖×e2
13 ♙×e2 ♙d7!
Intending ... ♘a4.
14 a4?!

Better was h3-Benko.

14 ... ♙g4!
15 ♙e3 ♘h5
16 ♖h6 ♖×h6
17 ♙×h6 ♙f4
18 ♙×f4 ♘×f4

The ending is clearly better for
Black because of White's Q-side
weaknesses.

19 b3 ♜ab8
20 g3 ♘d3
21 f4 f5!
22 a5 ♘d7

23 ♜ad1 fe

24 ♘3×e4

If 24 ♘2×e4 ♘b2 followed by
... ♜×b3, winning a pawn.

24 ... ♘b4

25 ♘f3

If 25 ♘c4 ♘c2 and ... ♘d4.

25 ... ♜b5!

Weaker is 25 ... h6? 26 ♘c3
♘c2 (½-½-Pfleger-Benko, Skopje
Olympiad 1972). 27 ♜f2 ♘d4 (27
... ♘a3!?) 28 ♘×d4 cd 29 ♜×d4
(29 ♘e2 ♜b5) 29 ... ♜×b3 ♞.

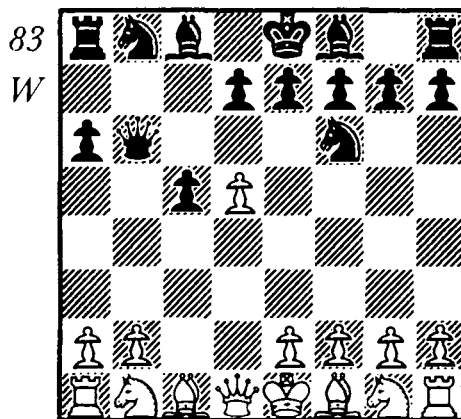
26 ♘c3 ♜×a5

27 ♘d2 ♘b6 ♞ ♞

Black has won a pawn. Analysis
by Benko.

B

5 ... ♙×b6 (83)



Black recaptures at once,
commencing play along the b-file
and avoiding the possibility of b7.

6 ♘c3 g6

7 ♘f3

7 e4 d6 transposes to the text after
8 ♘f3 ♖g7 9 ♘d2 0-0 10 ♖e2, but
weaker is 8 ♜b1 ♖g7 9 ♙a4?+

13 de

Black has the more active

position.

Steinberg-Georgadze, USSR

Young Masters Championship

1972, continued: 14 b3 ♖c5 15

♖b2 ♖c6 16 ♖a4 e5 17 ♖a1

♖h6 18 ♖c3 ♖d4 19 ♖c4+ ♖h8

20 ♖d1 ♖h5 21 ♖ ♖d8 22 ♖f2

♖g5 23 ♖f1 ♖h4 24 g3 ♖f4 25

♖h1 ♖h3 26 ♖g2 ♖×f3 27 gh

♖f2+ 28 ♖×f2 ♖×f2 29 ♖e2

♖×e2 30 ♖×e2 ♖f6 31 ♖c1 ♖g4

32 ♖g5 ♖f7 33 ♖d2 ♖×e2 34

♖×e2 ♖f2 35 ♖g1 ♖×e2 36 ♖e3

♖×e3 37 ♖×e3 ♖e6 38 ♖g5 ♖a7

39 ♖g2 a5 0-1 (On time).

♖bd7 10 ♖d2 0 0 11 ♖f3 ♖b8±

Mendoza-Benko, Malaga 1969.

7 ... d6

8 ♖d2

9 e4

10 ♖e2

10 ♖c4 ♖c7 11 ♖e2 ♖bd7 12

♖f4 ♖b6 13 ♖e3 is rather aimless:

13 ... a5! 14 ♖c2 a4 15 0-0 ♖a6

16 ♖×a6 ♖×a6 17 h3 ♖fd7 18

♖g5 ♖e8 19 ♖h1 c4 20 ♖f6 1 a3

21 ba ♖c5± (almost ±±)

Agdamus-Georghiu, Buenos

Aires 1970.

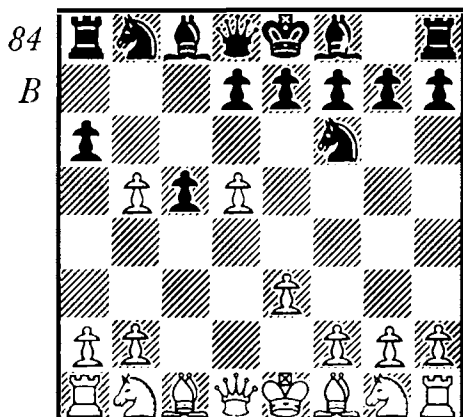
10 ...

11 0-0

12 ♖c2

♖bd7
♖c7
e6

1 d4 ♟f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cba6 5 e3
(84)



This move poses Black a slightly unpleasant dilemma. If he captures on b5 White recaptures with the bishop and he is a pawn ahead without the problem of castling by hand. If Black does not capture on b5 then White will be able to develop his f1 bishop and castle normally. In each case Black will be deprived of counterplay along the a6-f1 diagonal.

Why then does 5 e3 not refute the Benko Gambit? The answer lies in the move e3 itself—White's e-pawn belongs on e4 where it supports the

d-pawn and lies in wait until it can advance to e5. If White plays e3 and then e4 he loses an important tempo.

5 ... g6

a) 5 ... d6 6 ♟c3 g6 transposes to the text.

b) 5 ... ab? 6 ♟×b5 ♟a6 7 ♟×a6 ♟×a6 8 ♟c3 g6 9 ♟f3 d6 10 0-0 ♟g7 11 e4 leaves Black a tempo down on variation A in chapter 19 (page 98). If Black tries to avoid this after 6 ♟×b5 by 6 ... ♟a5+ 7 ♟c3 ♟a6 (not 7 ... ♟e4 8 ♟e2), White can keep the upper hand provided that he does not give up control of the light squares (8 ♟d3 may be best). In the game Lukács-Bukal, Pernik 1976, however, White played 8 ♟×a6 ♟×a6 9 ♟ge2 d6 10 0-0 g6 11 e4 ♟g7 12 ♟b1! 0-0 13 b4! ♟c4! (13 ... c×b4 14 ♟×b4 ♟bd7 15 ♟e3±) 14 ♟b3 ♟×b4 15 ♟×b4 cb 16 ♟×b4 ♟c8! with only a slight edge for White.

6 ♟c3

6 ♟f3 d6 7 ba ♟g7 8 ♟b5+

♞bd7 (8... ♞fd7 may be better) 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♞c3 ♖a5 11 ♖e2 ♙×a6 12 ♙×a6 ♖×a6 13 ♖×a6 ♙×a6 ♖ Biro-Földi, Budapest 1973.

We now examine:

A 6... ♙g7, which is divided into

A1 6... ♙g7 7 a4

A2 6... ♙g7 7 ♖b3

A3 6... ♙g7 7 ♞f3

A4 6... ♙g7 7 e4

A5 6... ♙g7 7 b×a6

A6 6... ♙g7 7 ♞gc2

and

B 6... d6, which is divided into

B1 6... d6 7 ♞f3

B2 6... d6 7 b×a6

B3 6... d6 7 a4

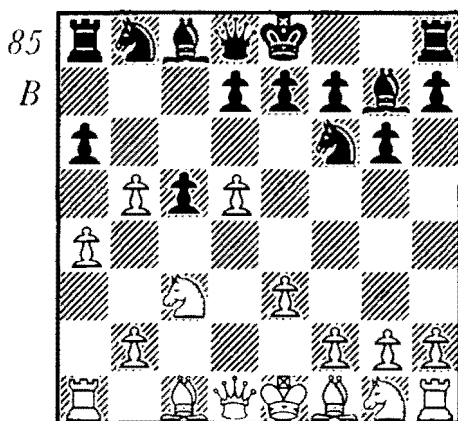
B4 6... d6 7 ♙c4

B5 6... d6 7 b6

A1

6... ♙g7

7 a4 (85)



7... 0-0

8 ♙d2!

Spassky-Tseshkovsky, Manila Interzonal 1976, went 8 ♙c4 d6 9 ♞gc2 ♞bd7 10 ba ♙×a6 11 ♙×a6

♙×a6 12 0-0 ♖a8 13 e4 ♙b8 14 ♙a3 ♙b4 with a quick draw.

8... d6

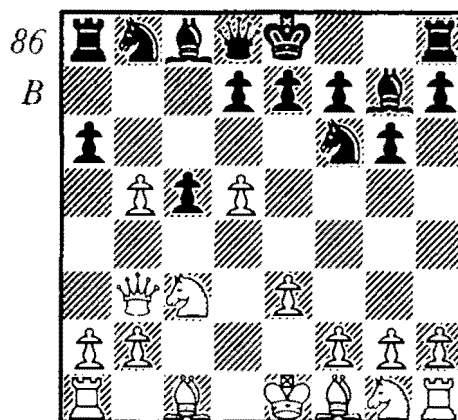
9 ♙c4±

White has a sound position and an extra pawn.

A2

6... ♙g7

7 ♖b3 (86)



7... 0 0

7... ab 8 ♙×b5 0-0 9 ♞f3 c6 10 0-0 ed 11 ♞×d5 ♙b7 12 ♙c4± ♙c6 13 e4? ♞×e4 14 ♙c1 ♞f6 15 ♙g5 ♙×d5 16 ♙×d5 ♞c6 17 ♙ad1 ♖c7∞ Nikolac-Szmetan, Wijk aan Zee 1976.

8 a4

If 8 b6 ♙b7 9 a4 a5.

8... c6!?

9 ♙a3 ♙b7

10 ♙c4 ♖a5

Better is 10... ed.

11 ♙d2 ♖b4

12 ♖a2 cd

13 ♞×d5 ♞×d5

14 ♙×b4 ♞×b4

15 ♖b3 ♙×g2

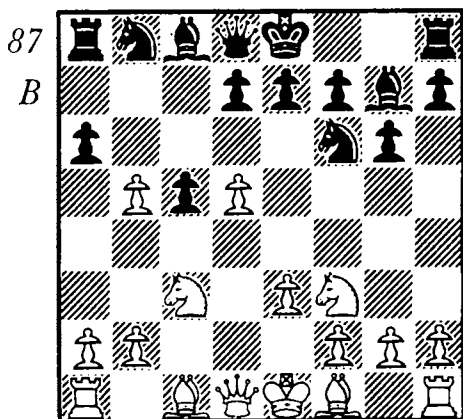
16 f3 d5!∞

Baumbach–Stanov, Primorsko 1973, continued 17 ♖xd5 ♜a7 18 ♔f2 ♖xh1 19 ♗e2 ♜d7 20 ♖c4 (20 e4 ♗xd5 21 ed ♜e8±) 20... ♜d2 21 ♜a1, and now 21... ♗d7 22 ♜xh1 ♜xb2 23 ♔d1 ♗e5 gives Black good attacking chances.

A3

6 ... ♗g7

7 ♗f3 (87)



7 ... 0-0

8 ba

8 a4 d6 9 e4 e6!∞, but not 9... ab 10 ♖xb5 ♖a6 11 ♖d2 (11 ♖g5 is also possible) 11... ♗e8! 12 0-0 ♗c7 13 ♔e2 ♗d7 14 h4!± F. Portisch–Barlov, Belgrade 1975; nor 9... ♗bd7 10 ♖d2 e6 11 de fe 12 e5!± Lukács–Peev, Pernik 1976.

8 ... d6

9 e4

9 ♖e2 transposes to variation A5.

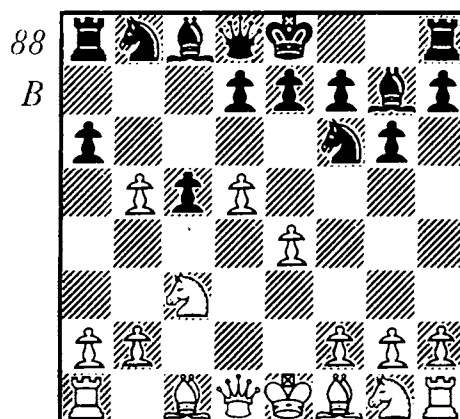
9 ... ♔a5

We have transposed to variation B1.

A4

6 ... ♗g7

7 e4 (88)



7 ... d6

8 ba

8 ♖d2 0-0 9 a4 e6 10 de fe 11 e5 de 12 ♖c3 ♔c7 13 ♗f3 ♖b7 14 ♖e2 e4 15 ♗d2 ♗d5 16 0-0 ab 17 ♖xb5 ♜d8∞ Faragó–Miles, Amsterdam 1976.

8 ... 0-0

9 f3?! ♗xa6

10 ♖c4 ♗d7

11 ♗ge2 ♗e5

12 ♖b3 c4=

Kchouk–Toran, Siegen Olympiad 1970.

A5

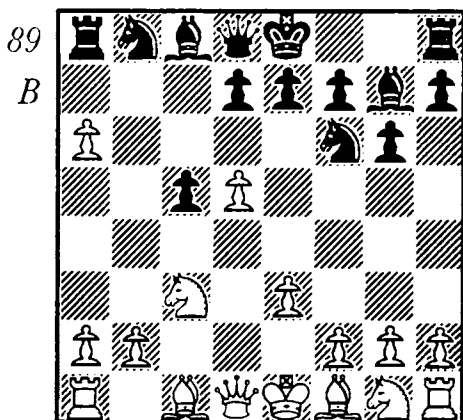
6 ... ♗g7

7 ba (89)

7 ... 0-0

8 ♗f3

a) 8 e4 d6 9 f4 (9 f3 is Kchouk–Toran, and 9 ♗f3 transposes to the text) 9... ♔a5! 10 ♖d2 ♖xa6 11 ♖xa6 ♗xa6 12 ♗f3 ♗b4 13 0-0 c4! 14 ♔h1 ♗d3 15 ♔e2 ♜fh8



16 ♖ab1 (16 b3? ♜g4! 17 bc ♜gf2+ 18 ♖×f2 ♜×f2+ 19 ♖×f2 ♜×c3±±) 16 ... ♖×b2 17 ♖×b2 ♜×b2± Hamann-Gheorghiu, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

b) **8 ♜c4** d6 9 ♜ge2 ♜bd7 10 0-0 ♜×a6 11 ♜×a6 ♖×a6 12 e4 ♖a8 13 ♖c2 c4 14 ♜e3 ♜e5 = Ree-Tringov, Skopje Olympiad 1972.

c) **8 d6!?** is a complicated suggestion of Benko's which still awaits a practical test.

8 ... d6

9 ♜e2

9 e4 ♖a5 transposes to variation B1.

9 ... ♜×a6

9 ... ♜×a6 10 0-0 ♖b6 11 ♜d2 ♜c7 12 ♜c4 ♖a7 13 e4 ♜a6∞ Kølbaek-K. Pedersen, Danish Ch 1974.

The text can be played as soon as White has moved his f1 bishop since if White now captures on a6 he will have lost a tempo.

10 0-0 ♜bd7

The most flexible move, leaving

the queen with a choice of squares. 10 ... ♖b6 11 e4 ♜bd7 12 ♖b1 ♜g4 (12 ... ♖fb8) 13 ♜g5! ♖fb8 14 ♜d2 (14 ♜×e7? f6) 14 ... ♜ge5 15 a3 ♜f6 (15 ... ♜d3!) 16 h3 h6 17 ♜e3 ♜e8 18 f4 ♜×c2 19 ♖×e2± Donner-Toran, Vienna 1972.

11 ♜×a6 ♖×a6

12 ♖e2 ♖a8

13 e4 ♖b8 =

Arnaudov-Popov, Bulgarian Ch 1973, continued 14 ♜g5 ♖b7 15 ♖ab1 ♖aa8 16 ♜d2 h6 17 ♜h4 g5 18 ♜g3 ♜h5 19 ♜c4 ♜×g3 20 hg ♖b4 21 ♜e3 e6 22 ♜h2 ♜d4 23 de fe 24 e5 ♜×e5 25 ♜e4 ♖f8 26 ♜×d6 ♜×e3 27 fe ♖g4 28 ♖h1 ♖ad8 29 ♖bd1 ♖f2 30 ♖×f2 ♖h5+ 31 ♜g1 ♖×d1+ 32 ♖f1 ♖×d6±±.

A6

6 ... ♜g7

7 ♜ge2?! 0-0 8 ♜f4 d6 9 ♜c4 ♜bd7 10 a4 ♜b6 11 ♜e2 ab 12 ♜×b5 ♜a6 13 ♜×a6 ♖×a6 14 e4 ♖d7 15 0-0 ♖fa8± Holm-Visier, Kapfenberg 1970.

B1

6 ... d6

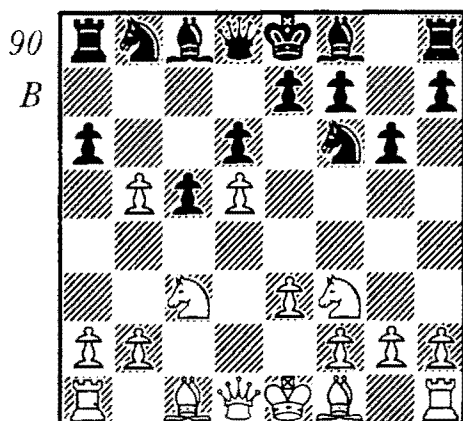
7 ♜f3 (90)

7 ... ♜g7

8 e4

a) **8 ba** 0-0 transposes to variation A3.

b) **8 ♜e2** 0-0 9 0-0 a×b5 10 ♜×b5 ♜a6 11 ♜×a6 ♜×a6 (11. ♖×a6!?) and now:



b1) **12 e4** ♖d7 13 ♗g5!± F. Portisch-Böhm, Wijk aan Zee 1975.

b2) **12 ♗d2** ♖b6 13 b3 ♖c7 14 e4 ♖fb8 15 ♖c2 ♖d7 16 ♖ab1 ♖b5 17 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 18 a4± Doroshkevich-Kalegin, Trud TU Ch 1974.

8 ... 0-0

9 ba

9 a4 ♖bd7 10 ♗d2 ♖e8 11 ♗e2 ♖c7 12 0-0 ♖b8 13 ♖b1 ab 14 ab ♖e5 15 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 = Lukács-Liebert, Szolnok 1975.

9 ... ♖a5

9 ... ♗xa6 10 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 11 0-0 leads to a position from chapter 3, page 23, where Black has an extra tempo, while 10 ♗e2, instead of 10 ♗xa6, leads to a position from chapter 19, page 98, in which Black has an extra tempo.

10 ♖d2

10 ♗d2 ♗xa6 11 ♗xa6 (11 ♗e2 ♖b4! 12 ♖c2∞) 11 ... ♖xa6 12 ♖e2 ♖fd7! 13 a4 (13 ♗g5 is better) 13 ... ♖xe2+ 14 ♖xe2

♖a6 ♖ Benko-De Fotis, US Ch 1972.

10 ... ♗xa6

11 ♗xa6 ♖xa6

11 ... ♖xa6 produces a position from chapter 15, page 74, but here Black has an extra tempo (... ♖a5).

12 ♖e2 ♖fd7

12 ... ♖bd7 13 ♖xa6 ♖xa6 14 ♖c4 ♖b8 15 f3 ♖e8 16 ♗d2 ♖c7 17 ♗d3 ♖e5+ 18 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 19 ♖c2 f5 = Farago-Benko, Vrnjačka Banja 1971.

13 a4

13 ♖c4 f5 14 f3? (14 ef) 14 ... fe 15 fe? (15 ♖xe4) 15 ... ♖b6 16 ♖xb6 ♖xb6 17 ♖f1 ♖d7 18 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 19 ♗e3 ♖b8± Kaufman-Benko, US Open Ch 1968.

13 ... ♖xe2+

Forced, otherwise 14 ♖b5±.

14 ♖xe2 ♖a6

15 ♖b1

15 ♖c4 ♖fb8, followed by ... ♖b4±.

15 ... f5!?∞

$\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$

Portisch-Benko, Palma de Mallorca 1971.

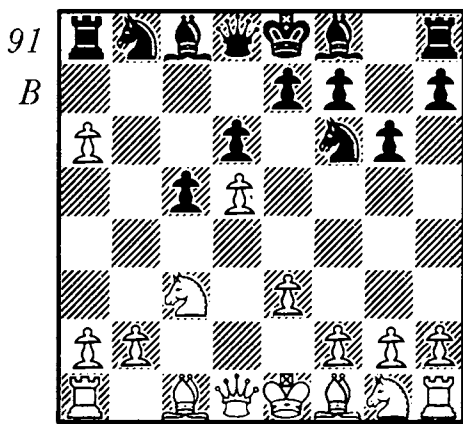
B2

6 ... d6

7 ba (91)

7 ... ♗g7

7 ... ♗xa6 8 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 9 ♖f3 ♗g7 10 0-0-0 11 ♖d2 (or 11 e4, transposing to chapter 3 page 23



but with Black a tempo down) 11 ... ♖b6 12 ♙e2 ♖b4 13 e4 ♖xc4 14 ♙xc4± Liptay-Filep, Debrecen 1970.

8 ♙b5+

8 ♙a4+ ♙d7 9 ♙a3 ♖xa6 10 ♙xa6 ♙b6 11 ♙b3 ♙xa6 12 ♙c2 0-0 ♞ Ivanov-Reshko, Leningrad Ch 1973.

8 ... ♖bd7

8 ... ♖fd7 9 ♖ge2 0-0 10 0-0 and now:

a) **10 ... ♖xa6** 11 e4 ♖c7 12 ♙d3 ♖e5 13 ♙c2 ♙a6 14 f4 ♖c4 15 ♙f3 e6 16 de fe 17 ♙b1 d5 18 ed cd 19 ♙d3 (Kuijpers-Benko, Wijk aan Zee 1970) and now 19 ... ♙b7 20 ♙xc4 dc 21 ♙xd8 ♙axd8 22 ♙f1 ♙d3 ♞ or 19 ... ♖d6 ♞.

b) **10 ... ♙xa6** 11 ♙xa6 ♖xa6 and now:

b1) 12 e4 ♙b6 13 ♙b1 ♖c7 14 ♖g5 ♙fb8 15 ♙d2 ♙f8 16 ♙h6 ♖e5∞ Ree-Bellon, Caorle 1972.

b2) 12 b3 ♖b4 13 a4 ♙a5 14 ♙b2 ♙a6 15 ♙b1 ♙d3 16 ♙xd3 ♖xd3∞ Antonov-Palatnik, Albenia 1975.

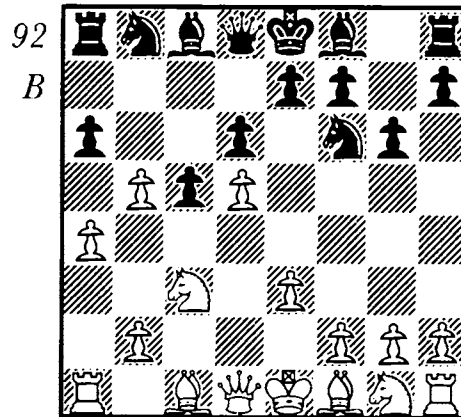
9 ♖ge2 0-0

10 0-0 ♙xa6 11 ♙xa6 ♙xa6 12 ♙b1 ♙a8 13 b4 cb 14 ♙xb4 ♙c8 15 e4 ♖g4 16 h3 ♖ge5 17 ♙e3 ♖f3+ 18 gf± Szabó-Fedorowicz, Lone Pine 1977.

B3

6 ... d6

7 a4 (92)



This is similar to variation A2.

7 ... ♙g7

8 ♙b3 ♖bd7!?

a) **8 ... 0-0?** 9 b6 ♙b7 10 a5±.

b) **8 ... ab** 9 ♙xb5+ ♙d7 (Benko suggests 9 ... ♖fd7 followed by ... ♖a6, ... ♖c7 and ... ♙a6) 10 ♙a3 (10 ♖ge2! might be even stronger) 10 ... 0-0 (10 ... ♙xb5 11 ab and 12 ♖ge2±-Korchnoy) 11 ♖ge2 ♖a6 12 0-0 ♖c7 13 ♙c4 ♙b8 14 ♙c2 ♙c8 15 b3 ♙a6 16 ♙d2 ♙c8 17 ♙d3 ♙b7 18 e4 ♖d7 19 f4± Korchnoi-Calvo, Palma de Mallorca 1972.

The text move, preventing b6, is a suggestion of Korchnoi's.

9 ♙a3 0-0

10 ♙c4 ab

As usual, the right time to capture on b5 is just *after* White has developed his f1 bishop.

11 ab

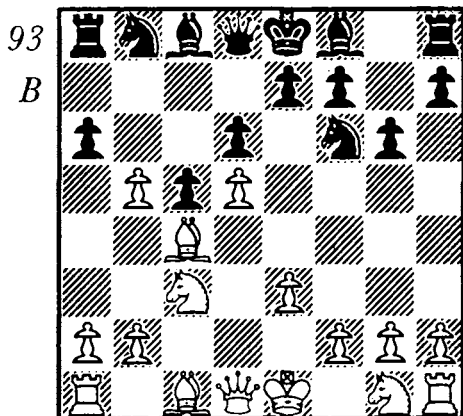
This move explains why ♖a3 is necessary. White hopes that the b5 pawn will restrict Black's counterplay.

11 ... ♗b7
12 ♖ge2 ♖b6=

The pawn has been successfully blockaded. Baumbach-Grünberg, East German Ch 1973 concluded 13 e4 ♖fd7 14 f4 ♖xc4 15 ♖xc4 ♖b6 16 ♖d3 e6 17 0-0 ed 18 ed f5 $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$.

B4

6 ... d6
7 ♗c4 (93)



7 ... ♗g7
8 ♖ge2 0-0
9 0-0 ♖bd7

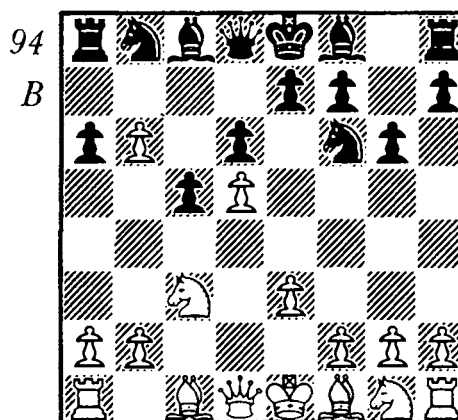
9 ... ab 10 ♗xb5 ♗a6 11 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 12 e4 ♖c7 13 f3 ♖fb8 14 ♖b1 ♖d7 15 ♗g5 ♖b6= Marszalek-Hurnik, Polish Ch 1975.

10 ba ♖b6!
11 ♗b5 ♗xa6
12 ♗xa6 ♖xa6
13 e4 ♖a8
14 ♖c2 ♖fb8
15 ♖fe1 ♖a5=

N. Littlewood-Beyen, Havana Olympiad 1966.

B5

6 ... d6
7 b6 (94)



7 ... ♖bd7
8 a4 ♖xb6
9 a5 ♖c7!?

Better is 9 ... ♖b7—the queen has no real future on c7 and later moves to b7.

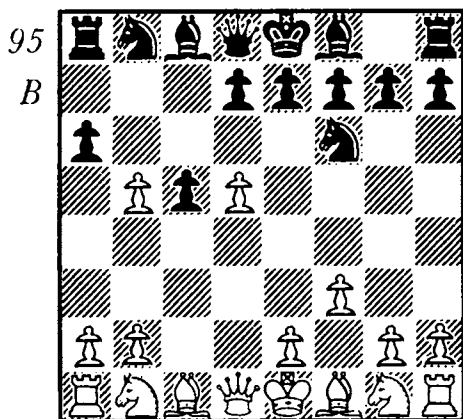
10 ♖f3 ♗g7
11 h3 0-0
12 ♗c4 ♖b8
13 0-0 ♖e8
14 ♖e2 ♖b7

Not only is the queen better placed here but the e8 knight needs c7.

15 ♗d2 ♖c7
16 ♖d3 ♖e5±

Reshevsky-Browne, Skopje 1970.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 f3 (95)



This move has only recently become acceptable. The idea is to play e4 before developing the b1 knight but once e4 has been played White will find it difficult to force e5 because his f-pawn does not support this advance and it stops the g1 knight going to f3. Another detrimental point is that when White has moved both his e-pawn and his f-pawn his king is more exposed than in many other variations.

5 ... g6

a) **5 ... d6** 6 e4 g6 transposes to the text.

b) **5 ... e6!?** was successful in the game Hook–Kaufman, Maryland 1975. Black strikes in the centre before White has made any progress with his development. 6 e4 ed 7 e5 ♖e7 8 f4 d6 9 ♘f3 ♘bd7 10 ♖e2 (10 ♘c3 de 11 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 12 ♖xd5 ef+ 13 ♔f2 ♖b8 14 ♔xf4∞; 10 ♘c3 d4 11 ♔c4!? dc 12 0-0∞) 10 ... ♘e4 11 ♘c3 ♘xc3 12 bc g6 13 ed ♖xe2+ 14 ♔xe2 ♔xd6 15 0-0 0-0∞.

c) **5 ... ab!?** This is the move that 5 f3 sets out to refute. Most commentators have written ‘not 5 ... ab because of 6 e4 ±’ but Benko points out that 6 e4 can be met by 6 ... ♖a5+ (he also suggests the simple 6 ... d6) 7 ♔d2 b4, when White’s bishop on d2 is misplaced.

6 e4 d6

7 a4!?

Other plans are:

a) **7 ♘a3** ab 8 ♔xb5+ (also possible is 8 ♘xb5 followed by ♘e2, ♘2c3 and ♔e2) 8 ... ♘bd7 (if 8 ... ♔d7 9 ♔c4!± because Black is a little cramped) 9 ♘e2

♙g7 10 ♖c3 (perhaps 10 ♖c4 is better) 10 ... ♜xa3! (weak is 10 ... 0-0 11 ♙g5± Lim-Botto, Tjentiste 1975) 11 ba ♖xe4 12 fe ♙xc3+ 13 ♙d2∞.

b) 7 ♖c3 ♙g7 8 ♙g5 h6 (8... 0-0 9 ♙d2 ♜e8 is possibly more active. e.g. 10 a4 ♖bd7 11 ♖h3 ♖b6 12 ♖f2 e6 13 a5 ab 14 ♙xb5 ♙d7 15 ♖g4 ♙xb5 16 ♖xb5 ♖c4 17 ♙c3 ♖xg4 18 ♙xg7+ ♙xg7 19 ♙xd8 ♜exd8 ♞ Viner-Gheorghiu, Adelaide 1971.) 9 ♙e3 0-0 10 ♙d2 ♙h7 11 a4 ♖bd7 12 ♖h3 ♖c5 13 ♖f2 ab 14 ♙xb5 ♙a6 15 ♙e2 ♙xb5 16 ♖xb5 ♖e8 17 ♖d1 ♖c7 18 ♖dc3 ♖xb5 19 ♖xb5 c4 20 0-0 ♖d3 ♞ Woodhams-Westerfeld, Amsterdam 1976.

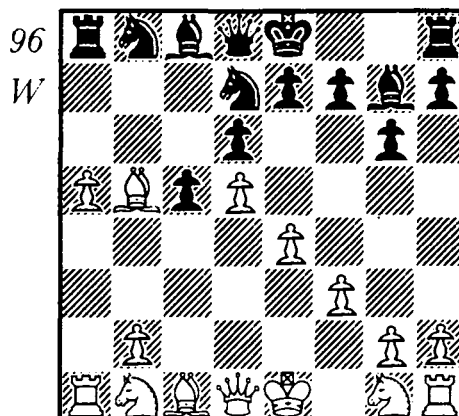
7 ... ♙g7

8 a5

Better is 8 ♖c3 0-0 9 ♙d2! and if 9... ♖bd7 10 ♖h3 or if 9... e6 10 ♙c4.

8 ... ab

9 ♙xb5+ ♖fd7! (96)

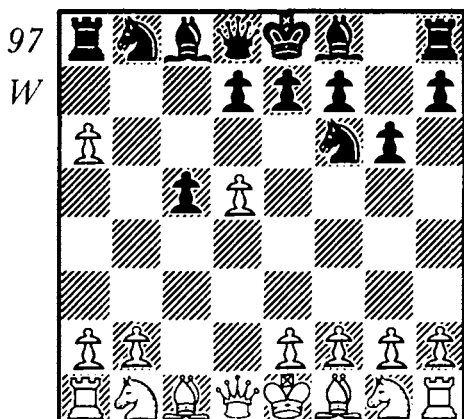


Black has to play carefully. If 9 ... ♖bd7 10 ♙d2!± The game Korchnoi-Miles, Amsterdam 1976 continued: 10 ♙a4 0-0 11 ♖c2 ♖a6 12 0-0 ♖c7 13 ♙c4 ♜b8 14 ♖d2 ♖c5 15 ♙c2 ♜b4 (also possible is 15 ... ♖a6∞) 16 ♜a2? (better is 16 ♜a3) 16 ... ♖a6 (intending ... ♜xc4) 17 ♜a4 (17 b3 ♜b8!) 17 ... ♙c8 18 ♜xb4 ♖xb4 19 ♙b3 ♙d7∞

Clearly there is a wealth of new possibilities in this system.

19 Black Does Not Play 5 . . . ♗×a6

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb a6 5 b×a6 (97)



The move 5 . . . ♗×a6 is played in perhaps 99% of all contemporary Benko Gambit games. The pressure along the a6–f1 diagonal provides Black with part of his compensation for the pawn and if he does not make this capture at once, or very soon, he might find himself in an inferior line in which White, having advanced his e-pawn, can meet . . . ♗×a6, thereby gaining time over many of the other variations considered in this book. The only logical reason for delaying . . . ♗×a6 is that Black may decide to

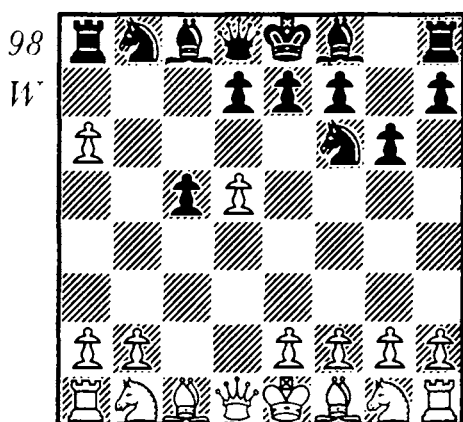
recapture with the knight, but since the c8 bishop is best placed on a6 this alternative development is of little or no real merit.

I would advise all Benko Gambit players to recapture with the bishop on a6 the moment White plays b×a6. The material in this chapter has been included solely as a warning of the sort of fate that can befall Black if does not play 5 . . . ♗×a6 and rather than consume valuable space in an attempt at being absolutely exhaustive I have limited the material in this chapter and provided just sufficient information to act as a convincing case for the prosecution.

A 5 . . . g6

B 5 . . . d6

5 . . . ♗×a6 is only satisfactory if White fianchettoes his f1 bishop, permitting Black to play his queen to b6 or a5 and then . . . ♗c7 followed by . . . ♗a6. But if White meets 5 . . . ♗a6 with a system involving e4, Black will face similar problems to those in variation A.

A**5 ... g6 (98)****6 ♗c3**

6 d6?! e4 7 ♗c3 ♗×a6 8 ♗g5 h6 9 ♗h4 ♗c6 10 ♗f3 g5 11 ♗g3 g4 12 ♗h4 d5 13 ♗×d5 ♗×d5 14 ♗×d5 ♗a5+ 15 ♗d2 ♗b4 16 ♗c1 ♗×a2 17 ♗e3+ ♗e7 18 ♗f5 ♗d5 19 ♗a3 ♗×a3 20 b4 c4 21 ♗×e7 ♗×e7 22 e4 $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ Shainswit-Formanek, US Open Ch 1972.

6 ... d6

6 ... ♗g7 7 ♗f3 d6 (7 ... 0-0 8 e4 ♗a5 9 ♗d2 ♗×a6 10 ♗e2 is similar to variation B2 in chapter 15 (note to White's 10th move) but here Black has not yet played ... d6. The game Polugayevsky-Holmov, 34th USSR Ch, Tbilisi 1967, continued 10 ... ♗×e2 11 ♗×e2 ♗h5 12 0-0 ♗×c3 13 ♗b3 ♗a6 14 ♗×a6 ♗×a6 15 b4 c4 16 ♗d2 ♗c5 17 ♗×c4 ♗×e4 18 ♗e1 ♗×c3 19 ♗×e7 ♗×d5 20 ♗×d7 ♗hf6) 8 g3 ♗a5 9 ♗d2 0-0 10 ♗g2 ♗×a6 (10 ... ♗×a6 11 0-0 ♗bd7 transposes to chapters

9-14) 11 0-0 ♗c7 12 ♗c4 ♗b4 13 ♗c3 and now:

a) **13 ... ♗a6** 14 ♗d2 ♗fb8 15 ♗b1 ♗d7 16 ♗c2 ♗b5 17 ♗×b5 ♗×b5 18 ♗fe1± Despotović-DeFotis, Dresden 1969.

b) **13 ... ♗b5** 14 ♗×b5 ♗×b5 15 ♗c2 ♗a6 16 ♗e1± Marović-Bertok, Yugoslavia 1967.

7 e4 ♗g7**8 ♗f3**

8 ♗a4+ ♗d7 9 ♗c2 (now Black cannot recapture on a6 with the bishop) 9 ... 0-0 10 ♗f3 ♗b6 11 ♗c2 ♗×a6 12 0-0 ♗c7 13 ♗e1 ♗fb8 14 ♗b1± Vaganian-Parma, USSR Yugoslavia match 1972.

8 ... 0-0**9 ♗e2**

a) **9 g3?! ♗a5!** (or 9 ... ♗b6) followed by ... ♗×a6, when White's g3 is completely out of place.

b) **9 h3 ♗fd7** (9 ... ♗bd7 10 ♗e2 ♗×a6 11 0-0 ♗b6 12 ♗f4 ♗×e2 13 ♗×e2 ♗a4∞ Bajec-Forintos, Ljubljana 1969) 10 ♗e2 ♗×a6 11 0-0 ♗b6 12 ♗e1 ♗c8 13 ♗c2 ♗×e2 14 ♗×e2± Gligorić-Udovčić, Yugoslav Ch 1957.

Note that the position after 9 ♗e2 can also arise from the King's Indian Defence via the move order 1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗f3 0-0 6 ♗e2 c5 7 d5 b5 8 cb a6 9 ba.

9 ... ♗×a6**10 0-0**

10 ♖×a6 ♜×a6 11 0-0 ♞d7
12 ♞g5!± Bronstein-Lundin,
Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1948. See
chapter 1, page 10.

10 ... ♖c7

10... ♞bd7 11 h3 ♞b6 12 ♞el
♖c8 13 ♞f4 ♞×e2 14 ♞×e2 ♖a6
15 ♞c1 ♞a4 16 ♞×a4 ♖×a4 17
b3 ♖a6 18 ♞c4± Gligorić-Van
Seters, Hastings 1962/63.

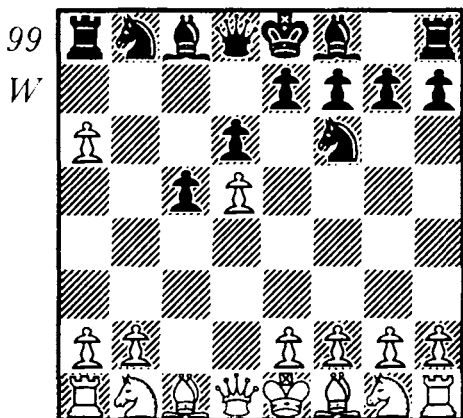
11 ♞el ♞bd7

12 ♞×a6 ♞×a6±

Taimanov-Bronstein, Zürich
1953 (see chapter 1, page 12).

B

5 ... d6 (99)



6 g3

6 ♞c3 g6 transposes to variation
A.

6 ... g6

7 ♞g2 ♞g7

8 ♞f3

a) **8 e4** 0-0 9 ♞ge2 ♞×a6 (9...
♞×a6 10 0-0 ♞bd7 11 ♞c3
transposes to variation B1 in
chapter 9, note (a) to White's 9th
move) 10 0-0 ♖b6 11 ♞d2 ♞g4 12
♞b1 ♞c7 13 ♞c3 ♞e5 14 ♞f3
♞a6 15 ♞×e5 ♞×e5 16 ♞a4
♖b7 = Nedeljković-Bertok, Yugo-
slav Ch 1953.

b) **8 ♞h3!** 0-0 9 0-0 ♞×a6 (9...
♞×a6 10 ♞c3 ♞bd7 is variation
B1 in chapter 9) 10 ♞f4 ♖b6 11
♞a3 ♞b4 12 ♞d2 ♞g4 13 h3 ♞e5
(13... ♞×b2? 14 ♞c4) 14 ♞c3
♞d7 15 ♖d2 ♞fb8 16 ♞d3 (16
♞fc1 ♖a6!∞) 16... ♞b×d3 17
e×d3 ♖a6 18 ♞c4!± Bukić-
Bogdanović, Yugoslavia 1973.

8 ... 0-0

9 0-0 ♞×a6

9 ... ♞×a6 transposes to
chapters 9-14.

10 ♞c3 ♞c7

10 ... ♖b6 (or ... ♖a5) 11
♞d2 ♞c7 12 ♞c4 ♖b4 transposes
to variation A, note to Black's 6th
move.

11 ♞f4 ♞a6

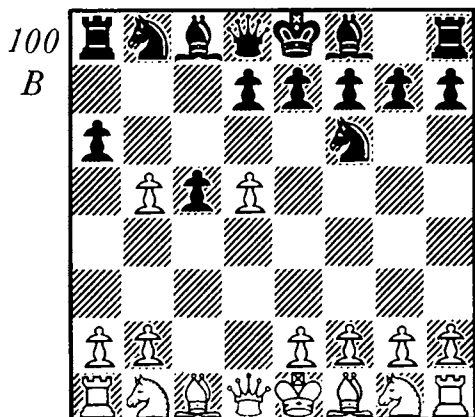
12 ♖d2 ♞b8

13 ♞fe1 ♞b4

14 ♞h6±

Donner-Udovčić, Bled 1961.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cb (100)



4 . . . a6

Delaying . . . a6 avoids the variation 5 e3 (chapter 17) but it allows White to reach the favourable positions of chapter 19. e.g. **4 . . . g6 5 ♘c3 ♙g7 6 e4 d6 7 ♙e2 0-0 8 ♘f3 a6 9 ba ♙×a6 10 0-0** (see page 98).

4 . . . ♙b7 leads to a completely different type of game. e.g. 5 ♘c3 ♙a5 6 ♙d2 e6 7 e4 ed 7 ed ♙c7 9 ♙c4 d6 10 ♘ge2 ♘bd7 11 0-0 ♘e5 12 b3 ♙e7 13 ♘g3 ♙d7 14 f4 ♘×c4 15 bc, and Black has nothing to show for the pawn. Ståhlberg-Stoltz, Sweden 1933.

5 ba

5 ♘c3 ab 6 e4 is chapter 21, but if 6 ♘×b5 ♙a5+ 7 ♘c3 g6 we will transpose to one of the more regular variations in chapters 9-15. Another possibility after 6 ♘×b5 is 6 . . . e6!? e.g. 7 ♘c3 ed 8 e3 ♙b7.

Black can also meet **5 ♘c3** with **5 . . . d6** 6 e4 g6 and now:

a) **7 f4!** ♙g7 8 ♘f3 0-0 9 ba ♙×a6 10 ♙×a6 ♙×a6 11 0-0 ♙b6 12 ♙e2 ♘bd7 13 e5 de 14 fe ♘g4 15 ♙f4 ♙fa8 16 ♙ael c4+ 17 ♙h1 ± Schiffer-Hug, Berlin 1971.

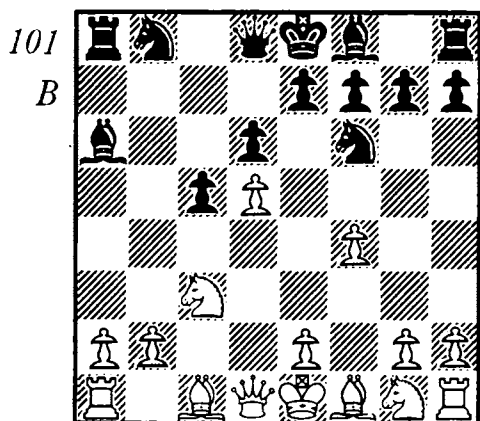
b) **7 ♘f3** ♙g7 8 h3 (too slow. Better is 8 ♙e2 0-0 transposing to the note on 4 . . . g6 above.) 8 . . . 0-0 9 ♙c2 ab 10 ♙×b5 ♘×e4! (this resource has been made possible by White's poor use of his 8th move) 11 ♘×e4 ♙a5+ 12 ♘c3 ♙×c3+ 13 bc ♙×b5 14 ♘d2 ♙d3 ♢ Matchett-O'Kelly, Bognor Regis 1956.

5 . . . ♙×a6

6 ♘c3 d6

7 f4 (101)

This is a fairly recent (1974) idea. White first plays f4 and ♘f3,



then e4, after which ... ♕×f1 is met by ♖×f1 and ♖f2-g1. The point is that White avoids weakening his K-side with moves such as g3 or h3 and his setup with pawns on e4 and f4 and his knight on f3 is ready for the advance e5 at an opportune moment.

7 ... g6
8 ♖f3 ♕g7
9 e4 ♕×f1
10 ♖×f1 0-0

Benko suggests 10 ... ♖b6 as a possible improvement, since 11 ♖f2? can then be refuted by 11 ... c4+. In reply to 10 ... ♖b6 Benko mentions 11 h3, to be followed by ♖f2, but then I like the look of 11 ... ♖h5, keeping the white king in the centre for as long as possible and threatening 12 ... ♕×c3+ 13 bc ♖g3 and 14 ... ♖×c4. Benko's other suggestion is 11 c5!? which leads to interesting complications. e.g. 11 ... de 12 fe ♖g4 13 ♖c2 ♖a6∞.

11 ♖f2 ♖bd7

The most popular move, holding

back e5 and preparing for an eventual ... ♖b6-a4.

a) 11 ... ♖fd7 12 ♖g1 ♖a6 13 e5 de 14 fe ♖×e5 15 ♖×e5 ♕×e5 16 ♕h6 ♖e8 17 ♖f3 f6 18 ♖ad1 ♖b4 19 d6 ed 20 ♖e4 f5 21 ♖×d6 ♕×d6 22 a3 ♕×h2+ 23 ♖×h2 ♖h4+ 24 ♖h3 ♖×h3+ 25 ♖×h3∞ Lombard-Gerusel, Mannheim 1975.

b) 11 ... ♖b6 12 ♖g1 ♖a6 (12 ... ♖bd7 transposes to the text) 13 e5 (13 ♖h1 ♖b4 14 a3 ♖a6 15 ♕e3 ♖d3 16 ♖d2 ♖fb8 17 ♖fb1 ♖×b2 18 ♖×b2 ♖×c4 19 ♖×b8+ ♖×b8 20 ♖×c4 ♕×a1 ♚ Emma-R. Garcia, Mar del Plata 1976) 13 ... ♖d7 14 ♖e1 ♖c7 15 ♖h1?! ♖a6 16 ♖f2 (Murci-Platonov, Daugavpils 1974) 16 ... ♖c4! ♚-Boleslavsky.

12 ♖g1 ♖b6

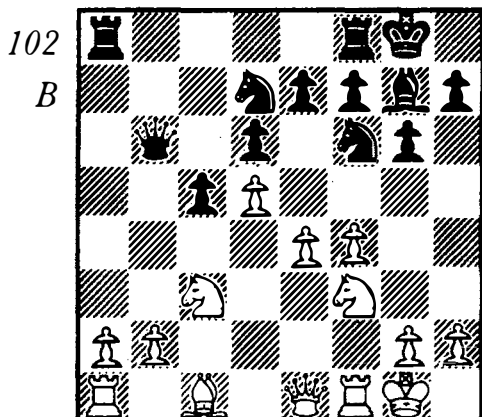
Weaker is 12 ... ♖b6 and now:

a) 13 ♖h1 ♖d7 14 ♖c2 ♖fb8 15 ♖b1 ♖a4 16 ♖d1 e6 17 b3 (Pelts-Platonov, Daugavpils 1974) and now instead of 17 ... ♖b5? 18 ♖d2! ♖b6 19 de fe 20 ♕b2±, Black should have tried Benko's suggestion 17 ... ed 18 ab ♖×b1 19 ♖×b1 de, with a strong central pawn mass for the piece (∞).

b) 13 ♖e2 ♖a4 14 ♖d1 ♖×c3 15 bc ♖a4 16 c5 ♖c4 17 ♕b2 f5 18 c4 ♖b6 19 ♖dc1 ♖fb8 20 ♖c2 ♖b4 ½-½ (±) Goodman-Benko, Lone Pine 1977.

13 ♖c1 (102)

- a) **13 e5?** de 14 fe ♖g4+.
 b) **13 h3** (preparing for e5) 13 ... ♜fb8 14 e5 ♗e8 15 ♜el ♗c7 = -Benko.
 c) **13 ♜h1** ♜fb8 14 ♜el ♜b7∞,



13 ... ♜b7!?

Taking advantage of White's previous move by attacking the d-pawn. The alternative is 13 ... c4+, intending to meet 14 ♜h1 with 14 ... ♗c5 (15 ♗e3 ♗fd7), but White can play 14 ♗e3!? (instead of ♜h1) sacrificing a pawn: 14 ... ♜xb2 15 e5 and now:
 a) **15 ... ♗e8** 16 ♗d4 ♜a3 17 h4 (17 e6!?) 17 ... ♗c7 18 h5 e6 19 hg fg 20 ed ♜xd6 21 ♗xg7 ♜xg7 22 de ♜xe6 $\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ (♚) Bukić-Sofrevsky, Yugoslav Ch 1975.

b) **15 ... ♗g4?!** 16 ♗d4 de 17 fe ♜b8 18 ♜b1! ♜c8 19 h3 ♗h6 20 g4 ♗c5 21 ♜h4 f6 22 ♜b6? (22 ♜b5! ♗d3 23 ef ef 24 ♗el g5!∞) 22 ... fe! 23 ♗e3 (23 ♗xe5 ♗xe5

24 ♗xe5 ♜c7+) 23 ... e4+ Ungureanu-Stanciu, Romanian Ch 1974.

14 ♗d2

14 e5 ♗xd5 15 e6 ♗xc3 16 bc fe 17 ♜xe6+ ♜h8 ♚.

14 ... c4

14 ... ♜xb2? 15 ♜b1 ♜a3 16 e5, followed by e6 and ♜b7±.

15 e5?!

Safer was 15 ♜b1 ♗c5∞.

15 ... de

16 fe ♗xd5

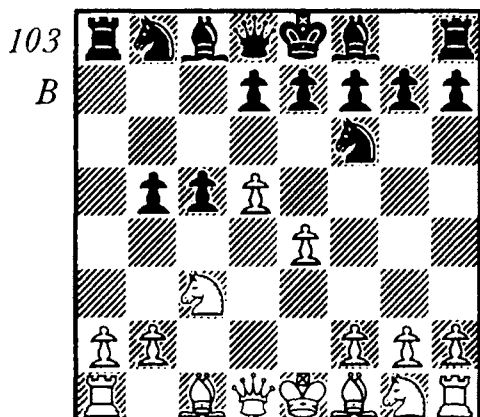
17 e6 ♜b6+

18 ♜h1 ♜xe6 ♚

Lombard-Benko, Costa Brava 1975 continued 19 ♜h4 ♗f6 20 ♜ael ♜g4 21 ♜xg4 ♗xg4 22 ♜xe7 ♗f6 (also good is 27 ... ♗f6. Black has given up his extra pawn in order to relieve the pressure on his position but he still has a slight edge because his Q-side attack can be renewed.) 23 ♗e3 ♜fb8! (threat 24 ... ♗f8) 24 ♗d4!? ♜xb2 25 ♗e5 (25 ♗g5 ♗h6∞, or 25 ... h6∞, or 25 ... ♜f8 26 ♗ce4 ♜xa2 27 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 28 ♜xf6 ♜d2+) 25 ... ♗xe5 26 ♗xe5 ♜c2! 27 g3 ♜xc3! 28 ♗xc3 ♗d5 29 ♜exf7 ♗xc3 30 ♜c7 ♗d5 31 ♜d7 ♗e3 32 ♜el ♜e8 33 a4 c3 34 a5 c2 35 a6 ♗c3 36 ♜cl ♗b2 37 ♜xc2 ♗xc2 38 a7 ♗d4 39 ♜b7 ♗xa7 0-1.

21 The Modern System 5 ♘c3 ab 6 e4

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 c×b5 a6
5 ♘c3 a×b5 6 e4 (103)



White stakes a firm claim in the centre rather than pursue the materialistic paths of 5 b×a6. His 6 e4 will be followed by preparation for an early e5, with the idea of disrupting Black's development and scoring a quick knockout in the centre.

Note, incidentally, that 5... ab is not the only possible reply to 5 ♘c3. In the game Gulko-Popov, where when Black played the interesting 5... ♖a5!?, play continued 6 ba g6 (better 6... ♙×a6) 7 ♙d2 ♖b6? (still 7... ♙×a6 was best) 8 ♘a4 ♖c7 (better 8... ♖d6 9 ♘×c5 ♖×d5) 9 ♘×c5 ♘×d5 (not 9...

♖×c5?? 10 ♖c1) 10 ♖c1 ♘c6 11 e4 ♘5b4 12 ♖a4 1-0. (If 12... ♘×a6 13 ♙×a6 ♙×a6 14 ♘×a6 ♖b6 15 ♘c7+).

6... b4

6... d6? 7 ♙×b5+ transposes to the old form of the gambit discussed in pages 97-99.

7 ♘b5

Whether or not White's system is eventually found to be sound will probably depend on whether the knight is well placed or badly placed on b5.

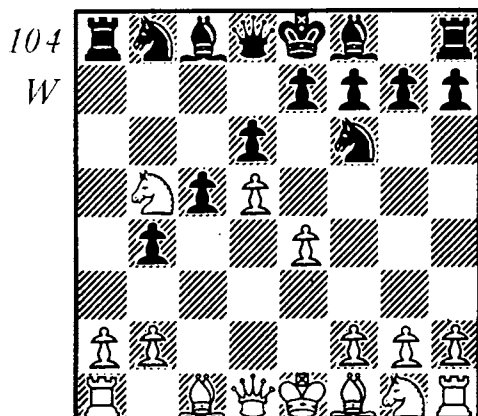
If 7 e5?? bc 8 efcb 9 ♙×b2 ♖a5+ 10 ♖d2 ♖×d2+ 11 ♙×d2 gf 干干 Vannrud-Akvist, Eksjö 1970.

7... d6 (104)

a) 7... ♘×e4? can be met by 8 ♖e2! (threat 9 ♘d6 mate) 8... f5 9 f3 winning a piece; or 8 ♙f4 d6 transposing to variation A.

b) 7... b3?! 8 e5 (8 a4 and 8 ♘c3 d6 9 ♖×b3 are also quite good for White) 8... ♖×a2 9 ♖b1! (not 9 d6 ed! 10 ef ♖×a1 11 ♖e2+ ♙e7, when Black can defend himself) 9... ♘c4 (9... ♘a6? 10 ♘c3! ±±) 10

♙×b3 ♙a5+ 11 ♖c3 ♖×c3 12 bc±.



A 8 ♖f4

B 8 ♖f3

8 ♖c4 has also been played, and Black should reply 8... g6 9 ♖f3 transposing to variation B2. If instead Black captures the e-pawn he suffers the same sort of fate as in variation A1: 8... ♖×e4? 9 ♙e2 f5 (9... ♖f6 10 ♖f4! ♖a6 11 ♖×d6+! with a winning game, Haik-Fraguela, Lanzarote 1976) 10 f3 ♖f6 11 ♖f4 ♖a6 12 ♖h3 g6 13 0-0 ♖g7 14 ♖fe1 with a great game for the pawn; Zhuravlev-Gruchko, USSR 1976.

A

8 ♖f4

This move threatens e5 and maintains the pressure against d6.

Black has tried:

A1 8... ♖×e4?

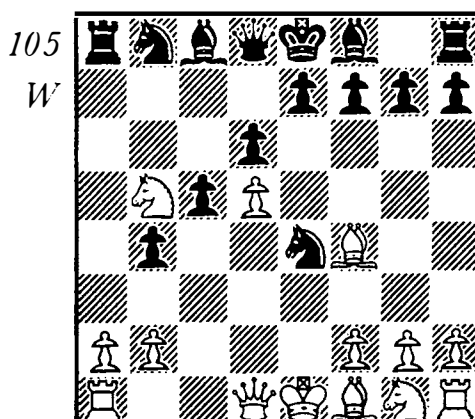
A2 8... g5!

A3 8... ♖a6

A4 8... ♖bd7

A1

8... ♖×e4? (105)



This move falls in with White's plan of attacking along the e-file though now, instead of the advance e5 being the key to the attack it is the less direct (but no less dangerous) pressure from White's queen on e2.

9 ♖d3

Also strong are:

a) **9 ♖f3** ♖a5 10 ♖c4 ♙b6 11 ♙e2 ♖a6 12 ♙×e4 ♖×b5 13 ♖×b5 ♖×b5 14 ♖d2 ♖d8 15 ♖c4 ♙c7 16 0-0 ♖d7 17 a4 ba 18 ♖×a3± Samoilov-Shepetkin, USSR 1975.

b) **9 ♙e2** g5 (9... ♖f6 10 ♖×d6+ ♖d7 11 ♙b5+ ♖c7 12 ♖c8 mate; or 9... f5 10 f3 g5 11 fe gf 12 e5!±) 10 ♖e5! (10 ♖×g5 ♖×g5) 10... de (If 10... f6 11 ♙h5+ ♖d7 12 ♙g4+ ♖e8 13 ♙×e4 fe 14 ♖f3±) 11 ♙×c4±, with the threats of 12 ♙×e5 and 12 d6.

9... ♖f6

10 ♙e2 ♖a6

11 ♖×d6+! ♖×d6

12 ♖b5+ ♖bd7

If 12 ... ♖d7 13 ♗×b8± or 12 ... ♗d7 13 ♗×d6.

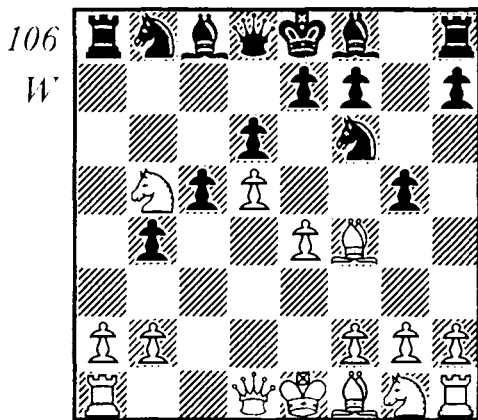
13 ♗×d6 ♖b6
14 ♗g3 ♗×d5
15 ♗f3 e6
16 ♗e5 ♗c7
17 ♗a4 ♖a6
18 ♖×a6 ♗×a6
19 0-0-0 ♗ab8

So far we have been following Birnboim-Romm, Israel Championship 1975/76. Now the most effective continuation is

20 ♖×d7! ♗×d7
Or 20 ... ♗×d7 21 ♖d1.
21 ♗×d7 ♗×d7
22 ♖d1±±

A2

8 ... g5! (106)



This interesting move was discovered by Benko and first mentioned by him in the January 1976 issue of *Chess Life and Review*. Black encourages the white bishop onto g5 so that the move ... ♗×e4 will come with gain of tempo on the bishop and Black will have an extra tempo with which to defend himself

against the attack instituted by ♖e2.

9 ♗e3 (107)

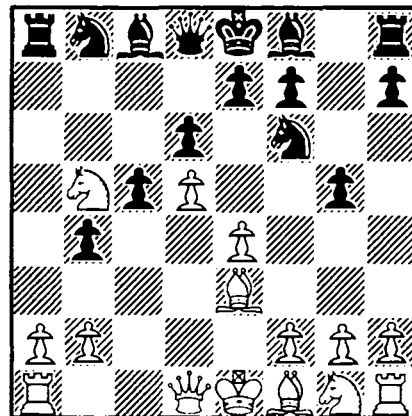
a1) 9 ♗×g5 ♗×e4 10 ♗f4 ♗g7 (interesting is 10 ... ♖a5!? 11 ♗c4 b3+ 12 ♖f1 ♗f5 13 ♖e2 ♗d8∞) 11 ♖e2 ♗f6, and now, after both 12 ♗×d6+ ♗f8 13 ♗×c8 ♖×c8 and 12 ♗×d6 ♗×d5 13 ♖d1 0-0, Black has excellent counterplay for the pawn.
7a2) 9 ♗×g5 ♗×e4 10 ♗d3 ♗×g5 11 h4 ♗e4 (11 ... ♗e6 12 de ♗×e6 13 ♖f3 d5 14 ♖g3 ♗a6 15 ♗a3 is probably good for White) 12 ♗×e4 ♖a5!∞.

a3) 9 ♗×g5 ♗×e4 10 ♗f3?! ♗g7 11 ♗d3 ♗×g5 12 ♗×g5 h6 13 ♗e4 ♗×b2!? 14 0-0 ♗d7 15 ♖e2 ♗×a1 16 ♗4×d6+ ♗f8 17 ♗×c8 ♖×c8 18 ♖×a1±± Pozarek-Valvo, USA 1975.

b) 9 e5 gf 10 cf ♗d7! 11 ♗c2 (11 ♗h3 is more accurate, since now Black can play 11 ... f3!; but not 11 fe ♖×c7+ 12 ♗c2 ♗c5±) 11 ... ♗×f6 12 ♗×f4 ♗g7 13 ♗d3 0-0 (better is 13 ... ♗a6-Benko) 14 0-0± Bagley-Valvo, USA 1975.

107

B



9 ... ♗×e4

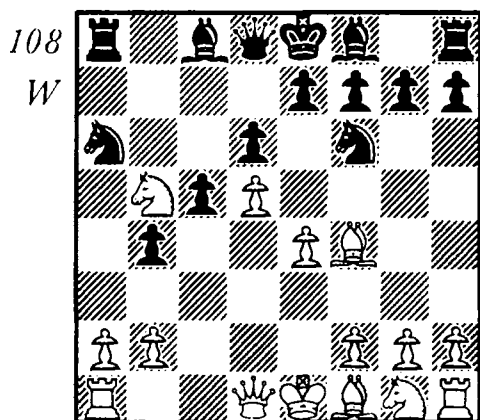
10 ♖d3 ♜f6
 11 ♖×g5 ♖g7
 12 ♜c2 ♜bd7
 13 0-0 ♜e5
 14 a4 ♜×d3
 15 ♖×d3 0-0
 16 ♜f4 ♖d7
 17 ♖fe1 ♖g4

Fronczek-Dobosz, Polish Championship 1976 continued:

18 ♖g3 ♖×g3 19 hg ♖d7 20 ♜c7
 ♖a7 21 ♜b5 ♖a5 22 b3 h6 23
 ♖h4 ♖e8 24 ♖ad1 ♖×b5 25 ab
 ♖×b5 26 ♖a1 ♖b7 27 ♖a6 ♜f8
 28 f3 ♜d7 29 ♜h5 ♖d4+ 30 ♜h1
 ♜b6 31 ♜f4 ♖e5 32 ♖d1 ♖×f4
 33 gf ♖a8 34 ♖×a8+ ♜×a8 35 f5
 f6 36 ♖f2 ♖a7 37 ♖e3 ♜g7 38
 ♖c1 ♜c7 39 ♜h2 ♖a2 40 ♖d3
 ♖e2 41 ♖f4 ♜b5 42 ♜h3 ♜d4 43
 g4 ♖b2 44 ♖e3 ♜f7 45 ♖×h6
 ♖×b3 0-1.

A3

8 ... ♜a6 (108)



Vaganian's move. Black develops his b8 knight in such a way that after e5 and e6 White's e-pawn will be en prise.

9 ♜f3 g6
 10 e5 ♜h5
 11 ♖a4

Not 11 ♖g5? f6! 12 ef ef 13 ♖e3
 ♖g7 14 ♜d2 f5 15 ♜c4 0-0 16
 ♖c2 f4 17 ♖c1 f3, and Black has
 the upper hand. Tukmakov-
 Vaganian, Vilnius 1975.

11 ... ♖d7

If 11 ... ♖d7?? 12 ♜×d6+! ed
 13 ♖b5±±.

12 e6!

Now we see the main point of 11
 ♖a4. Black cannot capture twice
 on e6. Feeble is 12 ♖e3 ♖g7! (not
 12 ... de? 13 ♜×e5 ♜f6 14 ♜c6
 ♖b6 15 ♖×c5! ♖×c5 16
 ♖×a6!±±) 13 g4 ♖×g4! 14
 ♜c7+ ♜f8 15 ♜×a8 ♖×a8.

12 ... fe

13 de ♖c6

13 ... ♜×f4 14 ed+ ♖×d7 15
 ♜×d6+±±.

14 ♜×d6+! ♖×d6

15 ♖b5!

Despite having an extra piece
 Black is quite lost.

15 ... ♖×e6+

Or 15 ... ♜b8 16 ♖×a8 ♜×f4
 17 ♖×c6+±±.

16 ♖e5 ♖×b5

17 ♖×b5+ ♖d7

18 ♖×d7+ ♜×d7

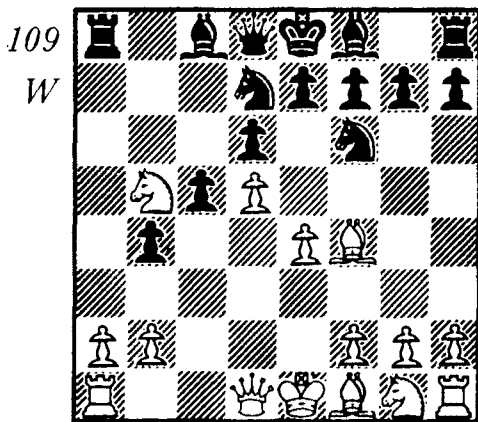
19 ♖×h8±±

Analysis by Igor Zaitsev.

A4

8 ... ♜bd7 (109)

The most sound and most



popular move, but possibly not so strong as 8... g5! which still awaits further practical tests. The text move holds up the advance e5 and contributes to Black's development.

9 ♖f3 ♖h5!?

A strange looking move by which Black announces that he will be content to draw at once (10 ♖g5 ♖f6 11 ♖f4 ♖h5 etc.)

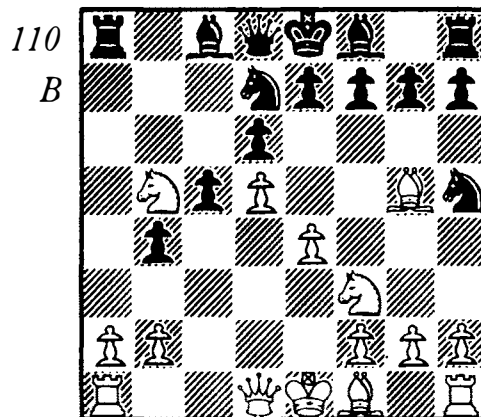
a) It is still unsafe to take the e-pawn because of (9... ♖×e4) 10 ♖e2 (or 10 ♖d3 and 11 ♖e2±) 10... ♖df6 11 ♖g5! ♖×g5 12 ♖×d6+ ♖d7 13 ♖b5+ ±±.

b) 9... ♖a6?! 10 e5 ♖a5 11 a4!! ba+ 12 ♖d2 ♖b6 13 ♖×a3 ♖×d5 (or 13... c4 14 ♖×c4 ♖g4 15 0-0 with an overwhelming position.) 14 ♖c4 ♖b7 15 ♖×a8 ♖×a8 16 ♖a4 ♖b8 17 ♖a5 ♖5b6? 18 e6!±± Dzhanov-Kalatozishvili, USSR 1976.

c) 9... ♖b6 10 ♖c1 (also good is 10 ♖c5! de 11 ♖×e5 ♖d7 12 ♖c2±—a consequence of Black's lack of control over the e5 square after... ♖b6, but not 12 ♖c7+ ♖d8 13 ♖b5 ♖g4∞. Now White

threatens 11 ♖×c5! dc 12 ♖c7+ ♖d7 13 ♖b5 mate.) 10... ♖×e4 11 ♖d3 (less accurate is 11 ♖e2 f5 12 ♖×c5 dc 13 ♖c7+ ♖f7∞) 11... ♖f6 12 ♖e2 e6 13 de fe 14 ♖g5 ♖bd5 15 ♖×e6 ♖×f4 16 ♖×f4+ ♖e7 17 ♖c4 ♖g4 18 f3 ♖f5 19 ♖d1± Tseshkovsky-Alburt, Vilnius 1975.

10 ♖g5 (110)



Threatening 11 ♖×d6+.

10... ♖hff

Black has sacrificed a tempo to lure White's bishop off the h2-b8 diagonal on which it can do such damage.

10... ♖b6 11 ♖d2 g6 12 ♖c4 ♖b8 13 a4! leaves Black with very little Q-side play.

Rashkovsky-Zilberman, Cheljabinsk 1975, continued 13... ♖g7 14 ♖d3 h6 15 ♖e3 ♖a6 16 0-0 0-0 17 ♖d2 ♖h7 18 f4±.

11 ♖c1?

This is a bad square for the rook which is needed on a1 to support the b5 knight by a4 when necessary. a) 11 ♖fd4, suggested by Szabo but not yet tested.

b) **11 e5** ♖×e5 (11... de 12 ♖e2 ♖a5 13 ♖×e5 ♖×e5 14 ♖×e5 ♖b6 15 ♖c7+ ♖d8 16 ♖f4—not 16 d6? ♖×d6 17 ♖d1 ♖×c7—16... ♖d7, and now 17 ♖f5 or 17 ♖g5 can be met by 17... ♖f6 when the exchange of queens leads to a level ending, while 17 ♖e3 g5 followed by... ♖g7 is unclear. Analysis by I. Zaitsev and Benko.) 12 ♖×e5 d×e5 13 ♖c4 ♖b7 14 0-0 ♖b6 15 ♖e1 h6 16 ♖h4 ♖d7 17 f4 g5 ♢ Radashkovich–Romm, Israel Ch 1975/76.

c) **11 ♖d3** g6 12 0-0 ♖g7 and it is Black for choice.

d) **11 ♖e2?! ♖a5!!** (a most useful idea, and one reason why White's knight might not be well placed on b5) 12 e5 (12 ♖c2 b3!—Benko) 12... ♖a6! 13 ef (13 ♖×d6+ ed 14 ef+ ♖×e2 15 fg ♖×g7 16 ♖×d8 ♖×d8 17 ♖×e2 ♖×b2 ♢—Benko) 13... ♖×b5 14 fe ♖×e7 15 ♖×e7 (15 ♖e3 ♖×f1 16 ♖×f1 f6 followed by... 0-0—Benko) 15... ♖×e7 16 ♖×e7+ ♖×e7 17 ♖×b5 ♖×b5 18 0-0 ♖b6 19 ♖fe1+ ♖d7 20 a4! (the best chance. If 20 ♖g5 h6 21 ♖×f7?? ♖f8 ♢ ♢) 20... ba 21 ♖×a3 ♖a8 22 ♖ae3 ♖×d5 23 ♖d3 c4 24 ♖d4 (so far as in I. Zaitsev–Benko, brilliancy prize game Szolnok 1975) and now Benko points out that the most accurate continuation is 24... ♖b6! when 25 ♖e5+ is not playable because of 25... ♖×e5. In any event the

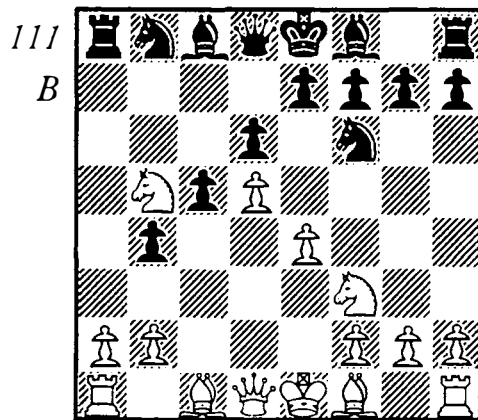
endgame is a win for Black.

11... ♖×e4!
12 ♖f4 ♖df6! ♢

Vaganian–Szabó, Costa Brava 1975 continued 13 ♖d3 g6 14 ♖e2 ♖g7 15 ♖d2 0-0! 16 ♖×e4 ♖×e4 17 ♖×e4 ♖×a2 18 ♖b1 ♖a6 19 ♖d3, and now according to Szabo Black should play 19... ♖d7! 20 ♖c4 ♖×b5! 21 ♖×b5 ♖f5! If White does not play 20 ♖c4 he has no way to meet the threat of 20... ♖b8.

B

8 ♖f3 (111)



This move has the same aims as 8 ♖f4 (i.e. an attack along the e-file) but avoids the problems of 8 ♖f4 g5!

8... g6

a) **8... ♖×e4?** is still bad for Black: 9 ♖c4! g6 10 ♖e2! (10 0-0 is also good) 10... ♖f6 11 ♖f4 (threat 12 ♖×d6+) 11... ♖a6 12 ♖×d6+! ♖×d6 13 ♖b5+ ±± (If 13... ♖d7 14 ♖×b8 or 13... ♖bd7/♖d7 14 ♖×d6).

b) **8... ♖bd7** 9 ♖f4 transposes to variation A4.

9 c5

The most direct approach to the position.

9 ♖c4 ♖g7 10 e5 de 11 ♖xe5 will transpose to the text, but Black must not meet 9 ♖c4 with 9 ... ♖xe4? which, as usual, is refuted by 10 ♖e2: e.g. 10 ... ♖f6 11 ♖f4 ♖a6 12 ♖xd6+! ♖xd6 13 ♖b5+ ±±.

Possible is 9 ♖c4 ♖g7 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♖e1 or 11 ♖e2, but this idea still awaits a practical test.

9 ... de

10 ♖xe5

Interesting is 10 d6 ed 11 ♖g5!? ♖a5! (nothing else suffices to parry the threat of 12 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 13 ♖c7+. e.g. 11 ... ♖a6 12 ♖xf6! ♖xf6 13 ♖d5 ♖b8 14 ♖c6+ ♖c7 15 ♖c7±±; or 11 ... ♖c7 12 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 13 ♖xd6+ ♖f8 14 ♖d5 ♖a7 15 ♖xc5±±) 12 ♖xe5 ♖e7! 13 ♖xf6 (if 13 ♖xd6+ ♖xd6 14 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 15 ♖xf6 0-0) 13 ... ♖xf6 14 ♖c7+ ♖d8 15 ♖c4 ♖xc7! (if 15 ... ♖a7 16 ♖d5 with a strong attack) 16 ♖xa5 ♖xb2. Black has excellent counterplay for the exchange. Analysis by Igor Zaitsev.

10 ... ♖g7

11 ♖c4 0-0

12 0-0

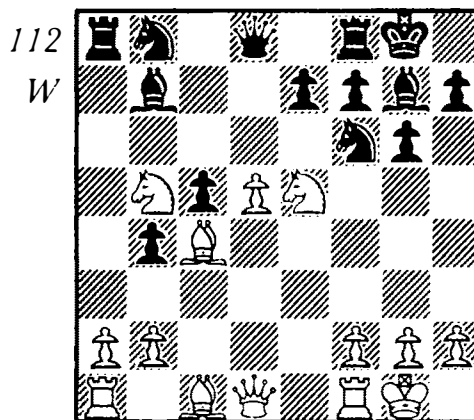
12 d6? should be met by 12 ... ♖b7 or 12 ... ♖a5 but not 12 ... ed? 13 ♖xd6! ♖c8 14 ♖c7 ♖e4 15 ♖d5 ♖xc5 16 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 17 ♖xa8.

12 ... ♖b7 (112)

a) 12 ... ♖e4 (or 12 ... ♖e8) 13

♖e1 ♖d6 14 ♖xd6 ed 15 ♖d3 = b) 12 ... ♖a6 13 ♖e1 ♖xb5 14 ♖xb5 ♖xd5 15 ♖c2 b3 16 ♖e2 ♖xa2 17 ♖b1 ♖fd7 18 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 19 ♖xe7 ♖e5 20 ♖f4 c4 21 ♖xe5 ♖xb2 22 ♖be1 ♖d4 ♖ Gulko-Vasyukov, Erevan 1976.

c) 12 ... ♖fd7 13 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 14 d6 ed 15 ♖xd6 ♖e5 16 ♖d5? (better 16 ♖e2) 16 ... ♖g4! 17 f3 ♖xd6 18 ♖xa8 ♖d3! 19 ♖e3 ♖f5 20 ♖e4 ♖xe4 21 fxe4 ♖xb2 22 ♖b1 ♖e5 ♖ Farago-Barczay, Hungarian Championship 1976.



13 d6 c6

14 ♖c7 ♖d5

15 ♖xd5

Not 15 ♖xa8? ♖xe5.

So far we have been following the game Yudovich Jnr.-Kremenetsky, USSR 1975.

15 ... ♖xd6!

16 ♖d3 ed

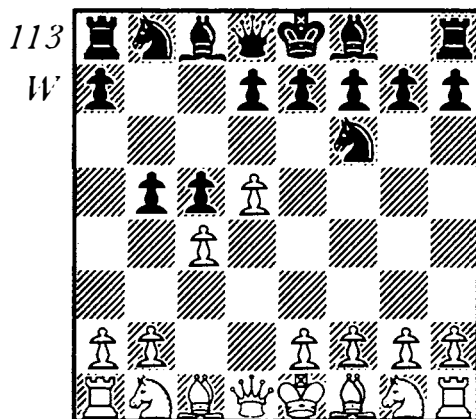
17 ♖f4 ♖b6!

18 ♖xa8 ♖xa8

The dynamic potential in Black's position provides ample compensation for the modest material investment.

22 Other 4th Moves for White

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 (113)



In this chapter we shall examine the numerous ways in which White can decline the gambit on move four. My own feeling is that Black should have nothing to fear in any of these systems simply because he gets part of the traditional Benko Gambit counterplay (the half-open b-file; the h8-a1 diagonal; and possibly the a6-f1 diagonal) without giving up a pawn. Nevertheless, Black cannot afford to take these systems too lightly in case he suddenly discovers that White has established a positional bind.

We now consider:

A 4 a4

B 4 ♘a3

C 4 b3

D 4 ♙c2

E 4 ♘d2

F 4 e4?

G 4 f3

H 4 ♘f3

I 4 g3 and

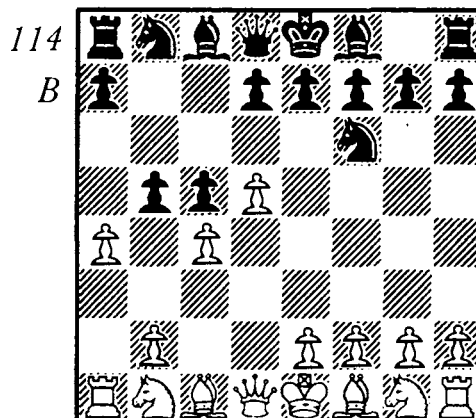
J 4 ♗g5

4 e3 g6 5 cb transposes to chapter

17.

A

4 a4 (114)



This move has been popularized by the Bulgarian International Master Pcev. White (temporarily)

sacrifices his c-pawn in an attempt to restrict Black's Q-side play. If Black tries to hang on to the pawn he fails and gets a bad position in the process.

4 ... bxc4

4 ... b4 blocks the Q-side and therefore reduces Black's counterplay on that flank to a minimum, but with little evidence to support or condemn the move it would be unreasonable of us to attempt to reach a firm conclusion. Intuitively I feel that 4 ... b4 is suspect but I could be proven wrong. Here are two examples:

a) 5 $\text{c}2$ (intending an eventual $\text{c}4$) 5 ... e5 6 e4 d6 7 b3 $\text{e}7$ 8 $\text{b}2$ $\text{bd}7$ 9 g3 $\text{f}8$ 10 h4 h5 11 $\text{h}3$ $\text{h}3$ 12 $\text{h}3$ $\text{d}7$ 13 f3 0-0-0 14 $\text{e}2$ $\text{e}8$ 15 0-0-0± Vaisman-Ghizdavu, Romanian Team Championship 1974.

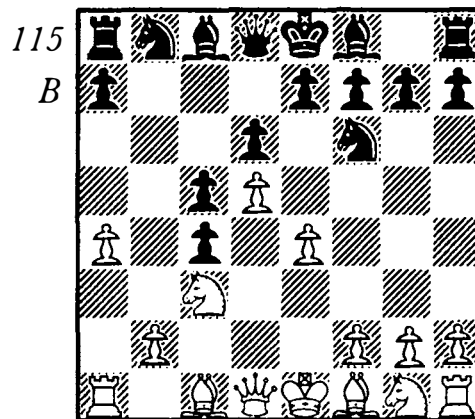
b) 5 g3 $\text{b}7$ 6 $\text{g}2$ e5 7 e4 d6 8 $\text{e}2$ g6 9 0-0 $\text{bd}7$ 10 $\text{d}3$ $\text{c}7$ 11 f4 ef 12 gf 0-0-0 13 b3 $\text{g}7$ 14 $\text{b}2$ ± (but Black won) Balcerowski-Georgadze, Dečín 1975.

5 $\text{c}3$ d6

a) 5 ... e6 6 e4 ed 7 ed d6 8 $\text{c}4$ $\text{e}7$, leaves Black with virtually no counterplay. e.g. 9 $\text{f}3$ 0-0 10 0-0 $\text{g}4$ 11 $\text{c}2$ $\text{bd}7$ 12 a5 $\text{b}8$ 13 $\text{c}1$ $\text{c}8$ 14 h3 $\text{h}5$ 15 g4 $\text{g}6$ 16 $\text{b}5$ ± Donchenko-Akopian, ½-final Burevestnik Championship 1975.

b) 5 ... $\text{a}5$ 6 $\text{d}2$ $\text{a}6$ is an interesting idea of Bellon's. Black forces the exchange of light squared bishops before completing the development of his K-side. Peev-Bellon, Cienfuegos 1976 continued: 7 e4 d6 8 $\text{c}4$ $\text{b}4$ 9 $\text{ge}2$ $\text{a}6$ 10 $\text{a}6$ $\text{a}6$ 11 0-0 $\text{b}7$ 12 $\text{g}5$ $\text{g}4$!? 13 $\text{c}1$ $\text{e}5$ 14 $\text{f}4$ $\text{d}7$ 15 $\text{e}2$ $\text{d}8$, with roughly equal chances.

6 e4 (115)



A1 6 ... $\text{a}6$?

A2 6 ... g6

A1

6 ... $\text{a}6$

A vain attempt to keep the pawn by putting the bishop on a square from where it has no real future. As with most other lines in which White declines the gambit Black does best to develop his c8 bishop on g4.

7 f4! e6

7 ... $\text{bd}7$ has also been found wanting after 8 $\text{f}3$, threatening e5, e.g.:

a) **8... ♖b8** 9 ♖e2! ♖b7 10 g3 e5 11 de fe 12 ♕h3! (weaker is 12 e5 ♕d5 13 ♕x d5?!-13 ♕g2 is better controlling the long diagonal-13 ... ♖x d5 14 ed 0-0-0 15 ♕g2 ♕x d6± Peev-Pedersen, Skopje Olympiad 1972.) 12 ... e5 13 ♕e6!±.

b) **8... g6** 9 e5!? de 10 fe ♕g4 11 ♕f4 ♕g7 (so far as in van den Broek-Goldenberg, Belgium 1975) 12 ♖e2!? followed by g4 with a very active game for White.

8 ♕f3

Now e5 cannot be stopped.

8 ... ed

Better is 8 ... ♕e7±.

9 e5! d4

No better is 9... de 10 fe ♕e4 11 ♖x d5 ♖x d5 12 ♕x d5 ♖d7 13 ♕f4 ♖c6 14 ♖d1 ♕d7 15 e6!± Peev-Alburt, Lublin 1972.

10 cf dc

10... ♖x f6 11 ♕b5 ♕x b5 12 ab d5 13 ♕e5 is also highly unpleasant for Black. e.g. 13 ... ♕d7 14 ♕x d7 ♖x d7 15 ♖f3 ♖e6+ 16 ♖f2 d3 17 ♕x d3 cd 18 ♖e1 with an overwhelming position. Niklasson-Spiridonov, Sandefjord 1976.

Possibly Black should have tried

10... d3!?

11 ♖d5! ♖c7

If 11 ... ♕d7 12 ♖e4+.

12 ♕x c4

12 ♖e4+ ♖d8 13 ♕x c4 ♕x c4 14 ♖x c4 is also good for White, but

not 12 ♖x a8?? ♕b7 13 ♖x a7 ♕c6 winning the queen.

12 ... ♕x c4

If 12 ... ♕b7 13 ♕b5+ ♕d7 14 ♖g5 gf 15 ♖x f6 ♖g8 16 ♖f2±.

13 ♖x a8

Now this capture is safe.

13 ... gf

Threatening 14 ... ♖e7+.

14 ♖f2 ♕e7

15 bc3 0-0

16 ♖e4

16 ♖b1 ♕c6 17 ♖b7 is also pleasant for White.

16 ... d5

17 ♖f5 ♖d8

18 h4! d4

19 ♖h3 ♖d7

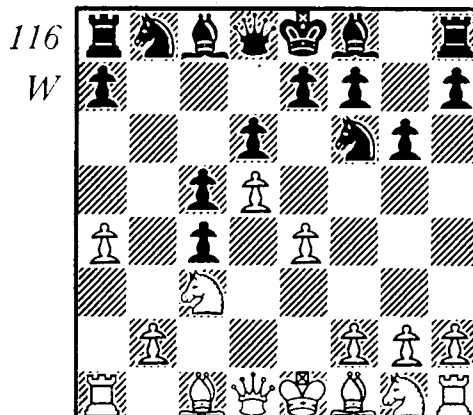
20 ♖g3+ ♖h8

21 ♖x d7!±±

Vaisman-Knaak, Halle 1976.

A2

6... g6 (116)



When in doubt, develop.

7 f4

Still aiming for e5.

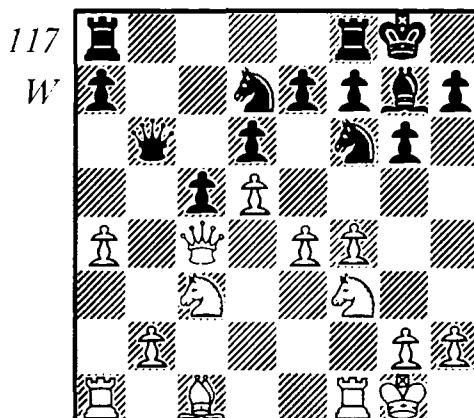
a) **7 ♕f3** ♕g7 (7... ♕g4!?) 8 ♕d2

♠bd7 9 ♠×c4 is a logical yet less forceful idea which was employed by Najdorf against de Miguel in the 1960 Argentine Championship. After 9 ... 0-0 10 ♠e2 ♠b7 (10 ... ♠e8!?) 11 0-0 ♠e8 12 ♠g5 ♠e5 13 f4 ♠×c4 14 ♠×c4 Black had a passive position.

b) 7 ♠×c4 ♠g7 8 ♠f3 (8 ♠ge2 0-0 9 0-0 ♠a6 10 f4?! ♠b4 11 h3 ♠a6 12 ♠×a6 ♠×a6 13 ♠g3 is too loosening. Rõtov-Pohla, Estonian Championship 1972, continued 13 ... ♠c7 14 ♠e1 ♠b8 15 ♠e2 ♠b4 16 ♠c3 ♠a8 17 ♠d2 ♠fb8 18 ♠e2 h5 19 h4 ♠g4±) 8 ... ♠g4! =

After this thematic move Black can exchange off the bishop (which has no other useful function) for White's knight, thereby reducing White's control of e5. Instead of 8 ... ♠g4! if Black plays 8 ... ♠fd7? he finds it much more difficult to prevent the advance of the white e-pawn, e.g. 9 0-0 ♠a6 10 ♠f4 0-0 11 ♠d2 ♠e8?! 12 ♠fel ♠c7 (12 ... f6 was essential but ugly) 13 e5! ± Filip-Janata, Czechoslovakia 1973.

7 ...	♠g7
8 ♠f3	0-0
9 ♠×c4	♠a6
10 ♠c2	♠×c4
11 ♠×c4	♠b6
12 0-0	♠bd7 (117)
13 e5!	♠e8
14 ♠el	♠b8



If 14 ... ♠b4 15 ♠c2.

15 a5!? ♠c7

16 ♠e2 c4!

17 ♠a4!?

Also interesting is 17 c6 ♠c5 18 ef+ ♠×f7 19 ♠g5 (if 19 ♠×c4 ♠b3!) 19 ... ♠f5 20 ♠×c7 ♠×e7 21 ♠×e7 ♠b3∞.

17 ... ♠c5

18 ♠×c4 ♠×a5

19 ♠d4 ♠b3

20 ♠c6 ♠×c1

21 ♠×c1

21 ♠×a5 ♠×e2+ 22 ♠×e2 is even stronger.

21 ... ♠b6+

22 ♠h1 ♠b7

23 ♠b4 ♠×b4

24 ♠×b4 ♠×b4

25 g3±±

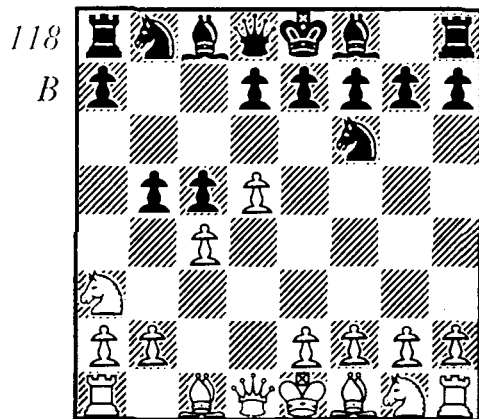
Peev-Ungureanu, Poiana Brasov 1973.

B

4 ♠a3 (118)

4 ... b4

a) 4 ... bc allows the a3 knight to move to the c4 immediately but perhaps that does not matter very



much since ... ♖bd7 and ... ♖b6 will eventually follow.

The text is better for Black than the line 4 a4 b4 because White's a-pawn is still on a2 and cannot advance without conceding the half-open b-file. Nevertheless, I prefer

b) **4...a6**, and if 5 cb ab 6 ♖×b5 (6 e4 b4 7 ♖b5 transposes to chapter 21) 6... ♙a6 7 ♖c3 d6, transposing to chapters 3–15 with each side having taken one extra move to reach this basic position.

5 ♖c2 e5
6 g3 d6
7 ♙g2 ♙e7

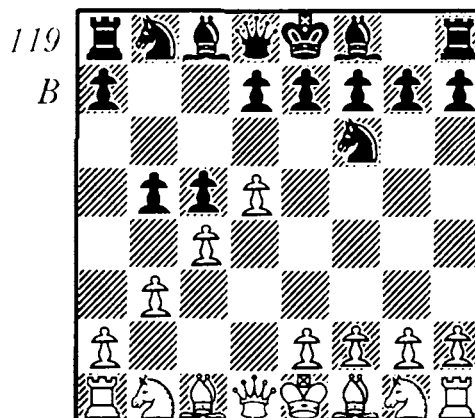
Benko suggests 7... g6.

8 e4 0-0
9 ♖e3 ♖e8
10 ♖f3 g6
11 g4!? ♖g7
12 h4 f5!
13 ef gf
14 ♖×f5 ♖×f5
15 gf5 ♙×f5∞

Velimirović–Negovian, Yugoslavia 1966.

C

4 b3 (119)



4... bc
5 bc d6

Black already has a good game since the b-file and the h8–a1 diagonal are completely open.

6 ♖c3

Possibly better is 6 ♖d2.

6... g6
7 ♙b2 ♙g7
8 f3 ♖bd7
9 e4 ♖b8
10 ♙c2

If 10 ♖b1 ♖×b2! 11 ♖×b2 ♖×d5±.

10... ♙a5!

White is already in trouble because his king is insecure.

11 ♙f2

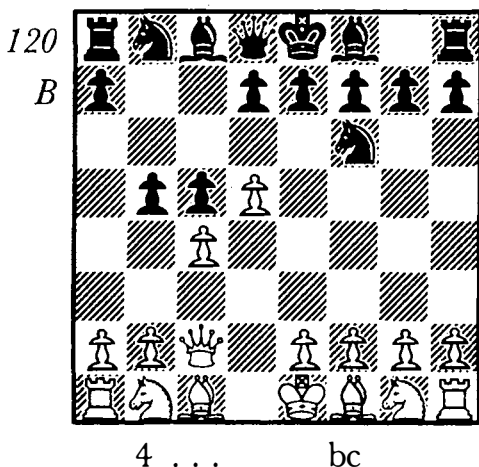
If 11 ♖e2 ♙a6 with pressure along the a6–f1 diagonal.

11... ♖×e4+
12 fe4 ♖×b2
13 ♙×b2 ♙×c3
14 ♙c1 ♖f6
15 ♖f3 ♖×e4+
16 ♙e3 ♙×a1±±

Masera-Benko, Reggio Emilia 1971.

D

4 ♖c2 (120)



Again the best remedy. 4... b4 5 e4 e5 6 ♘d3 d6 7 ♘e2 g6 8 f3 ♘g7 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♘g5 leaves Black without much counterplay, e.g. 10... h6 11 ♘e3 ♘bd7 12 ♘d2 ♖h7 13 a3 ♖c7 14 ab cb 15 ♘b3 ♘c5 16 ♘xc5 dc 17 ♘c1 ♘b7 18 ♘b3± Chebotarev-Shekhtman, USSR 1974.

5 e4 e6!

Taking advantage of White's lack of development. Another sensible plan is the simple 5... d6 followed by ... g6 etc., but the text is more active.

A naive alternative is 5... ♘a6?! 6 ♘xc4 ♘b4 7 ♖e2 ♖a5 8 ♘c3 d6. Black will soon be compelled to retreat his b4 knight and White is well placed to advance e5. The game H. Enevoldsen-Beyen, Munich Olympiad 1958, continued 9 ♘f3 g6 10 0-0 ♘g7 11

a3 ♘a6 (11... 0-0 12 ab! ♖xa1 13 ♘e3±±) 12 e5 ♘d7 13 ed 0-0 14 de ♖e8 15 d6 ♘b7 16 ♘xf7+ 1-0 (16... ♖xf7 17 ♖c4+).

6 ♘xc4 ed

7 ed d6

8 ♘c3 ♘e7

Black does not have time for 8... g6 because of 9 ♘f4 ♘g7 10 ♘b5.

9 ♘ge2 0-0

10 0-0 ♘bd7

11 a3 ♘b6

12 ♘a2 ♖e8

13 ♘g3 ♘b7

14 ♖d1 c4

15 ♘f5 ♘fxd5

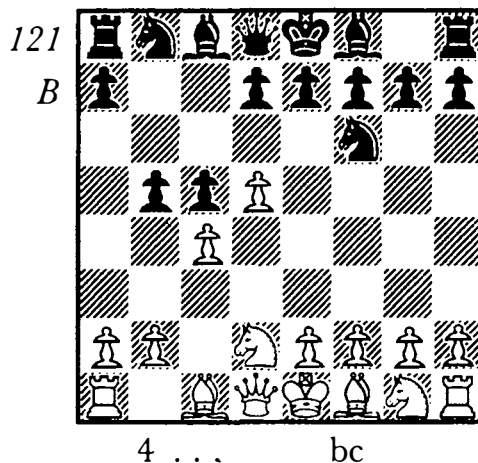
16 ♘xd5 ♘xd5

17 ♘f4 ♖d7+ ∞

White's pressure probably provides sufficient compensation for the pawn. Kolpanov-Mochalov, USSR Spartakiad 1975.

E

4 ♘d2 (121)



a) 4... d6 5 e4 bc transposes.

b) 4... ♖a5?! has been virtually

refuted by 5 b4! ♖×b4 6 ♜b1 and now:

b1) **6 ... ♖a5** 7 ♜×b5 ♖c7 8 ♠gf3 d6 9 g3 g6 10 ♠g2 ♠g7 11 0-0 0-0 12 e4 ♠bd7 13 h3 ♠a6 14 ♜b3± S. Garcia-Vaganian, Moscow 1975.

b2) **6 ... ♖a4** 7 ♖×a4 ba8 e4 d6 9 ♠d3 ♠bd7 10 f4 ♠a6 11 ♠gf3 g6 12 e5! ♠×d5 13 ♠e4 ♠5b6 14 ♠×a8 ♠×a8 15 ♠b2±± Lombard-Vukić, Switzerland-Yugoslavia Match 1972.

5 e4 d6

6 ♠×c4

A slower plan is 6 ♠e2 g6 7 ♠c3 ♠g7 8 ♠×c4 0-0 and now:

a) **9 ♠e2** ♠a6 10 0-0 ♠bd7 11 ♠g5 ♜b8 12 ♖c2 ♠×c4 13 ♠×c4 ♠e5! (not 13 ... ♠e8? 14 ♜ae1 ♠c7 15 f4 ♜b4 16 b3 ♠b6 17 a3 ♠d4+ 18 ♖h1 ♠×c4 19 ab ♠e3 20 ♜×e3 ♠×e3 21 ♖d3!± Lombard-Diez del Corral, Montilla 1973) 14 ♠e2 c4 15 ♜abl (if 15 f4?! ♖b6+ or 15 ... ♠d3) 15 ... ♖c7 with an active position; analysis by Benko.

b) **9 ♠d3** ♠a6 10 0-0 ♠×c4 11 ♠×c4 ♠bd7 12 ♠d2 ♜b8 13 b3 ♠e8 14 ♜b1 ♠c7 15 ♖c2 ♠b6 16 ♠e2 ♖d7 17 ♠c3 ♠×c3 18 ♠×c3 f5± By playing all the normal Benko Gambit moves Black has obtained a fine position without giving up a pawn. Nikolac-Georgadze, Polanica Zdroj 1976.

6 ... g6

7 b3

More active is 7 f4 ♠g7 8 ♠gf3 0-0 9 0-0 ♠bd7 10 ♖e2, but after 10 ... ♠b6 11 ♠b5 ♠d7 12 ♠d3 ♖c7 13 ♜b1 c4 14 ♠×c4 ♠×c4 15 ♠×c4 ♠×e4 the chances are equal; Grigorian-Tseshkovsky, 44th USSR Championship 1976.

7 ... ♠g7

8 ♠b2 0-0

9 ♠gf3 ♠bd7

9 ... a5 10 0-0 ♠a6 would also solve most of Black's development problems.

10 ♖c2

Or 10 0-0 ♠b6 11 ♜c1 ♜b8 = 12 e5? ♠f×d5 13 ♠×d5 ♠×d5±± H. Lyman-Benko, New York 1970.

10 ... ♠b6

11 0-0 ♜b8

Possibly 11 ... ♠g4 is more accurate, followed by ... ♖c7 and ... ♜fb8.

12 ♠c3 ♠g4

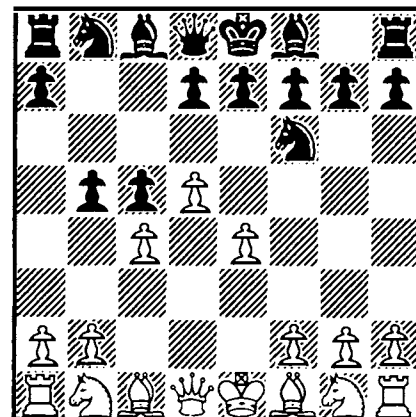
Black has kept White's opening advantage to a minimum. Estevez-Tseshkovsky, Sochi 1976.

F

4 e4? (122)

122

B



This unlikely looking counter gambit was suggested to Benko by E. Curti, a reader of *Chess Life and Review*.

4 ... ♖×e4

a) 4 ... **bc?** 5 c5 ±;

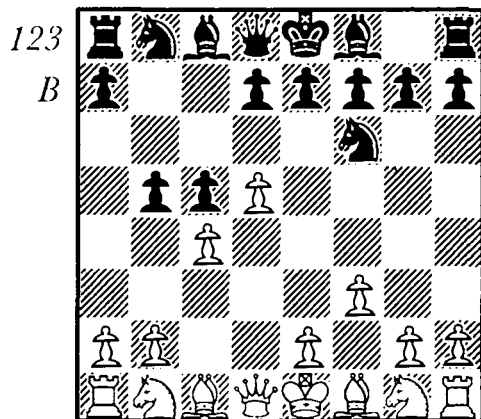
b) 4 ... **d6?!** 5 cb ♖×e4 6 ♔a4?! ♜f6 7 b6+ ♜fd7! (not 7 ... ♜d7 8 b7!± nor 7 ... ♜bd7 8 ♔c6± - Benko).

5 ♔f3	♔a5+
6 ♜c3	♜×c3
7 ♜d2	b4
8 bc	b3
9 ♔d1	b2
10 ♖b1	♔×a2
11 ♔c2	g6
12 ♖×b2	♔a5
13 ♜d3	♜g7
14 ♜e2	0-0
15 0-0	d6
16 f4	

According to Curti the position is unclear but Benko points out that after 16 ... ♜d7 White is a pawn down with a weakened pawn structure; and so ♖ ♖.

G

4 f3 (123)



4 bc

As usual!

5 e4	d6
6 ♜×c4	g6
7 ♜c3	♜g7
8 ♜ge2	0-0
9 0-0	♜bd7
10 ♜e3	

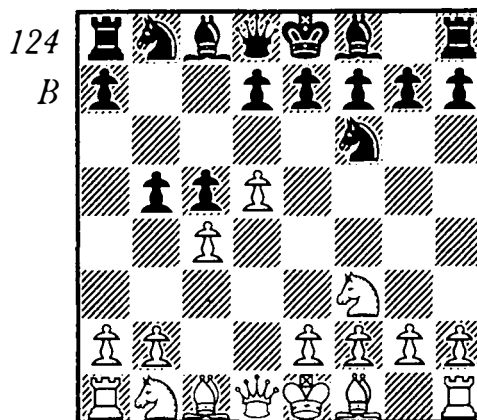
Better is 10 ♜f4 =

10 ...	♜e5
11 ♜b3	♜a6 ♖

Lim-Brown, 1971.

H

4 ♜f3 (124)



This is by far the most popular alternative to 4 c×b5 although it usually arises by transposition, via the move order 1 d4 ♜f6 2 ♜f3 c5 3 d5 b5 4 c4. It was by way of this move order that many games from as far back as the 1920's reached the diagrammed position. In examining the possibilities that now arise we shall, in general, ignore lines in which Black plays an early ... e6. The exception will be positions in which White has not captured on

b5 and in which he no longer has the option of doing so.

We shall examine:

H1 4 ... b4

H2 4 ... ♗b7!

H3 4 ... bc

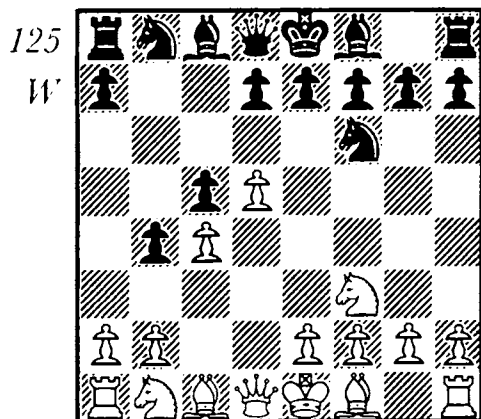
H4 4 ... g6

Note that 4 ... a6 is met by 5 ♗g5! ± rather than 5 a4, reaching variation H21 on page 118. Petrosian–Matulović, Zürich 1961, went 5 ♟bd2 bc 6 e4 d6 7 ♗×c4, and White had a position from variation E in which Black had played the useless move ... a6.

Interesting is 4 ... e6 5 ♗g5 h6! (5 ... ed!? 6 cd ♟a5+?! 7 ♟c3 ♗e7 8 d6 ± Razuvayev–Kozlov, USSR 1975) 6 ♗×f6 ♟×f6 7 ♟c3 b4 8 ♟b5∞.

H1

4 ... b4?! (125)



Blocking the Q-side and reducing his counterplay.

5 ♗g5 d6

6 ♟bd2 ♟bd7

7 c4 g6

8 ♗c2 ♗g7

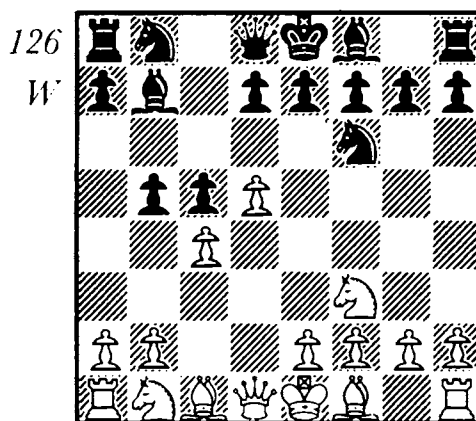
9 h3 0-0

10 0-0

White has all the advantages of a Modern Benoni position without having to fear Black's Q-side counterplay. Doda–Forintos, Polanica Zdroj 1968, continued 10 ... h6 11 ♗e3 ♟e8 12 ♟c2 e6 13 ♗d3 ♟e7 14 ♟fel e5? 15 a3 ±

H2

4 ... ♗b7 (126)



The most popular reply to 4 ♟f3, putting pressure on the white d-pawn. Our analysis now diverges into:

H21 5 a4

H22 5 ♟b3

H23 5 cb

H24 5 ♟c2

H25 5 ♟c3

H26 5 ♟bd2

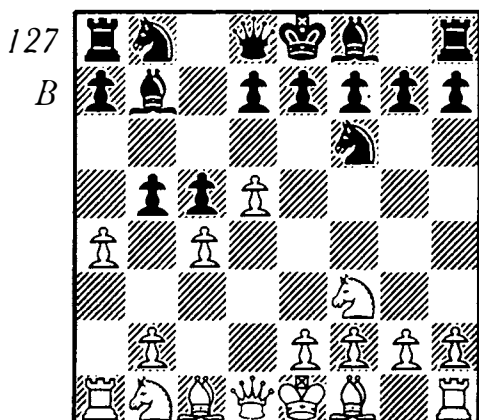
H27 5 e3

H28 5 g3

H29 5 ♗g5

H21

5 a4 (127)



5 ... a6

a) **5... bc** 6 c3 e6 (on 6... a5 comes 7 d2 and 8 e4) 7 e4 $\text{xe4}?! (interesting but unsound. Black should probably try 7... ed 8 ed d6 9 \text{xc4} \text{e7} 10 0-0 0-0 11 \text{el} \text{bd7}, although after 12 \text{a5} \text{a6} 13 \text{d3} \text{e8} 14 \text{h3} White has a definite advantage. Denker-S. Bernstein, Manhattan 1955-56) 8 \text{xe4} \text{exd5} 9 \text{c3} \text{d4} 10 \text{xc4!} \text{dc} 11 \text{xf7+!} \text{xf7} 12 \text{b3+} \text{c4} (12... \text{e8} although after 13 \text{e5!} \pm) 13 \text{e5+} \text{g8} 14 \text{xb7} \text{c6} 15 \text{xc6} \text{e8+} 16 \text{e3} \pm Rubin-stein-Spielmann, Vienna 1922.$

b) **5... b4** 6 bd2 (6 b3 is also possible) 6... d6 7 e4 e5 8 g3 (8 de fe 9 e5 de 10 xe5 $\text{bd7} \mp$; or 9 d3 e5 10 e2 c6 11 f1 d4 12 xd4 cd 13 f4 e7 14 g3 0-0= Balashov-Platonov, 39th USSR Ch, Leningrad 1971) 8... g6 9 g2 (9 h4 followed by h3 is unclear) 9... g7 10 0-0 bd7 , so far as in Malich-Knaak, East German Ch 1975, and now 11 $\text{h4} \pm$.

c) **5... a5+** 6 d2 b4 7 c2 d6 8 g5 bd7 9 bd2 g6 10 b3 g7 11 a2 c7 12 $\text{a5} \pm$ H. Camâra-L. Bronstein, Mar del Plata 1969.

6 ab

a) **6 $\text{fd2}?! bc$** 7 e4 c6 8 de (better is 8 c3 -Miles) 8... de 9 c3 c6 10 f3 c7 (or 10... $\text{h5}!?$ 11 g3 e5 12 $\text{xc4!} \mp$) 11 xc4 d8 12 c2 $\text{e7} \mp$ Kavalek-Miles, Haifa Olympiad 1976.

b) **6 bd2** d6 7 e4 a5 8 c2 g6 9 b3 g7 10 b2 bc 11 bc 0-0 12 d3 c7 13 a5 bd7 14 0-0 fb8 15 fb1 $\text{c8} \mp$ Malich-Tringov, East Germany-Bulgaria Match, Sofia 1967.

6 ... ab

7 xa8 xa8

8 c3 a5

8... b4 is possibly better, and if 9 b5 $\text{b6} \mp$ or 9 a4 bc 10 xa8 cb 11 xb2 $\text{b6} \mp$ -Keres.

9 d2

9 d2 b4 10 a4 xa4 11 xa4 e6 12 g5 e4 13 f4 d6 14 d2 xd2 15 xd2 e5 = E. Rabinovich-Savitsky, USSR 1934.

9 ... b4

10 b3 b6

11 a4 c7

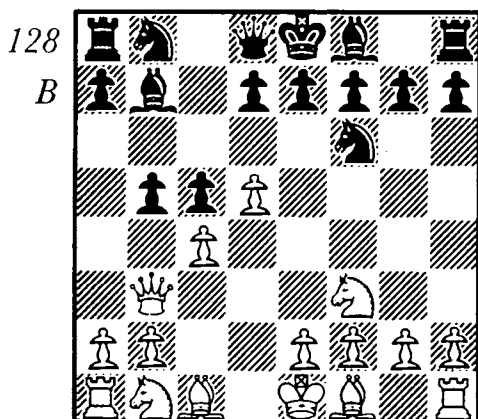
12 f3 d6

Kan-Keres, 22nd USSR Ch, Moscow 1955, continued 13 e4 g6 14 d3 g7 15 0-0 0-0 16 g5 c6 17 d2 b7 18 b3 a6 (threatening 19... ed) 19 de (19 c2 or

19 ♖e2 could be met by 19 ... ♟bd7 and 20 ... ♟e5) 19 ... ♜fe 20 e5! ♟h5∞.

H22

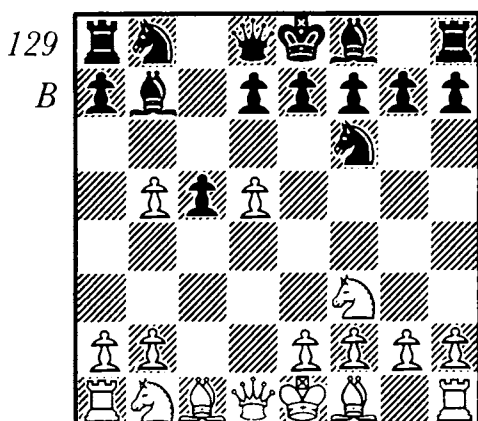
5 ♖b3 (128)



5 ... ♜b6 6 ♟c3 ♟b4 7 ♟a4 ♖c7 8 ♟d2 ♜g6 9 ♜g3 ♟g7 10 ♟g2 ♟d6 11 a3 a5 12 e4 0-0 13 e5 ♟fd7 14 ed ed 15 0-0 ♟f6 = Wade-Fairhurst, Match 1953.

H23

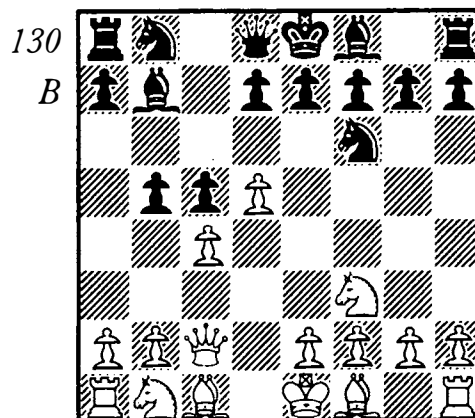
5 cb (129)



5 ... ♟d5 6 ♟c3 ♟b7 7 ♖a4 d5 8 ♟e5 e6 9 ♟c6 ♖b6 10 ♟a5 ♟bd7 11 e3 ♟d6 12 ♟x b7 ♖x b7 13 ♖a6 ♖b8 14 ♟e2 0-0 ♢ Tarasevich-I. Zaitsev, USSR 1964.

H24

5 ♖c2 (130)



5 ... d6

A sharper but somewhat dubious alternative is 5 ... e6 6 e4 ed 7 ed bc 8 ♟xc4 ♟xd5 9 ♟xd5 ♟xd5 10 0-0 ♟c7 11 ♜e1 ♟b4 12 ♖c2 0-0 (Podhorzek-Spielmann, Vienna 1933), and now 13 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 14 ♜xc7 ♟c2 15 ♟a3 ♟xa1 16 ♟f4! ♟c6 17 ♜e1 should win.

6 e4	b4
7 g3	e5
8 ♟h3	♟e7
9 ♟h4	♟c8
10 ♟xc8	♖xc8
11 h3	g6
12 ♟g2	♟bd7
13 ♟c3	♟h5
14 g4	♟g7
15 ♟h6	♟f8 =

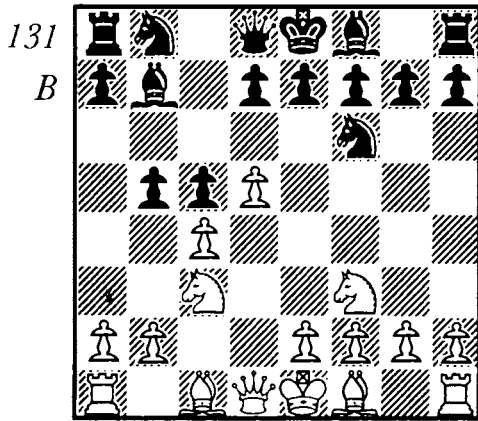
Prucha-Keres, Prague 1943.

H25

5 ♟c3 (131)

The most natural move, and the most popular.

5 ...	b4
6 ♖b3	



An interesting move, preventing ... bxc3 for just long enough for the c3 knight to manoeuvre to d1 and e3.

a) 6 ♖a4 e6 7 ♘g5 (7 d6?! ♙e4 8 ♘f4 g5 9 ♘e5 f6 10 ♘g3 h5 11 ♙d3 ♘g7 12 h3 ♘c6 13 b3 ♙xg3 14 fg f5 15 ♖d1 ♘xa4 16 ba ♘c3+ ♚ Rossetto-R. Garcia, Buenos Aires club game 1972.) 7 ... ed (more risky is 7 ... ♙c7!? 8 ♘xf6 gf 9 c4 ♙f4 10 ♙d3 d6 11 g3 ♙h6 12 ♖d1± Obregoso-Bazan, Buenos Aires Championship 1961) 8 cd g6 9 ♘xf6 ♙xf6 10 c4 ♙f4 11 ♘d3 ♘g7 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♙d2 ♙xd2 14 ♙xd2 d6∞ Dory-E. Steiner, Trebits ch 1928.

b) 6 ♙b1 c6 7 ♘g5 cd (7 ... h6 8 ♘xf6 ♙xf6 9 e4!? ♙xb2 10 ♙bd2 ♙f6 11 c5 ♙f5 12 ♙b3 h5 13 ♘d3 ♙f4 14 0-0 ♘e7 15 g3 ♙h6 16 ♙e4 h4± Balogh-E. Steiner, Budapest 1936) 8 cd h6 9 ♘xf6 ♙xf6 10 e4 ♙xb2 11 ♙bd2 ♘e7 12 ♘e2 0-0 13 0-0 d6 14 ♙c4 ♙f6± Negritac-Spielmann, Bucharest 1934.

6 ... ♙a6

a) 6 ... ♙a5?! 7 ♙d1 e6 (Benko suggests 7 ... g6) 8 e4!? ♙xe4 9 ♘d3 ♙f6 10 0-0 g6 (Too slow. 10 ... ♘e7 was necessary) 11 ♘g5 ♘g7 12 ♙e3 0-0 13 h4, with good attacking chances for the pawn. Guimard-Keres, Göteborg 1955.

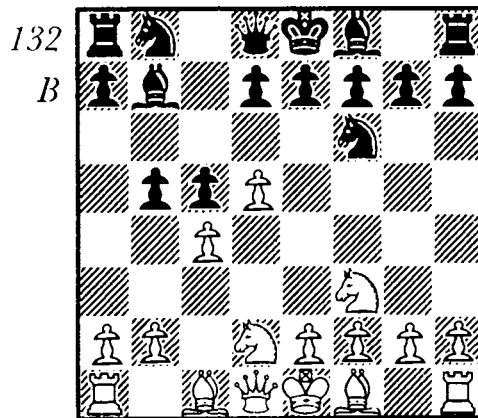
b) Benko prefers, 6 ... ♙c7.

7 ♙d1	c6
8 de	fc
9 g3	♘e7
10 ♘g2	0-0
11 0-0	♙c8
12 a3	♙h5
13 ♙e3	♖ab8
14 ab	cb
15 ♙d1	♙c5±

Reca-Réti, Buenos Aires 1924.

H26

5 ♙bd2 (132)



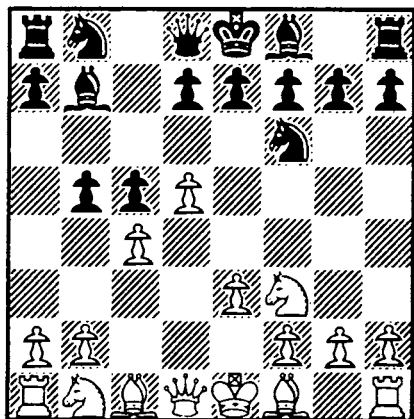
5 ... d6 6 e4 b4 7 ♘d3 g6 8 0-0 ♘g7 9 ♖c1 ♙bd7 10 ♙f1 0-0 11 ♖b1 a5 12 a4 ba 13 ba ♙c7 14 ♙c3 ♖fb8 15 ♙c2 e6 = Kolarov-Peev, Varna 1971.

H27

5 e3 (133)

133

B



5 ... g6
 5 ... ♖a5+ 6 ♜c3 b4 7 ♜e2 e6
 8 ♜f4 g6 9 de de 10 ♜e2±
 Stern-E. Steiner, Budapest 1933.

6 ♜c3 b4
 7 ♜e2 ♜g7
 8 ♜g3 e6
 9 e4 ed
 10 ed 0-0
 11 ♜e2 d6
 12 0-0 ♜bd7
 13 ♜f4 ♜b6
 14 ♖d2 ♜e8=

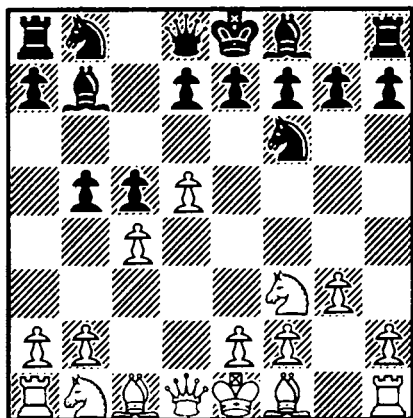
Hartoch-Kercs, Amsterdam
 1971.

H28

5 g3 (134)

134

B



5 ... g6
 6 ♜g2 ♜g7

6 ... bc 7 ♜c3 ♜g7 8 0-0 0-0 9
 ♜e5 d6 10 ♜xc4 ♜d7 11 ♜e1
 ♜a6 12 ♖a4 ♖c8 (12 ... ♜xc4
 13 ♖xc4 ♜b8∞) 13 ♜a5 ♜b6 14
 ♖h4 ♜e8 15 ♜g5 ♖c7 16 ♜c6
 ♜b7 17 e4 ♜bd7 18 f4 ♖h8 19
 e5!± Johannessen-Fischer,
 Havana Olympiad 1966.

7 0-0 0-0

8 ♜e1

White does best to keep his b1
 knight at home for the moment so
 that if Black plays ... bxc4 it will
 be able to go to a3 in order to
 support the recapture on c4. e.g. 8
 ♜c3 bc 9 ♜d2 d6 10 ♜xc4 ♜bd7
 11 ♜g5 ♜a6 12 ♖a4 ♜xc4 13
 ♖xc4 ♜b8 14 ♜ab1 ♜b4 15 ♖d3
 ♖b6± S. Oliviera-Trompoŵsky,
 Rio de Janeiro 1938.

8 ... d6
 9 e4 bc
 10 ♜fd2 ♜bd7
 11 ♜xc4 ♜b8
 12 ♜d2 ♜b6
 13 ♜a5 ♜a8
 14 ♜a3 ♜fd7
 15 ♜b1 e6±

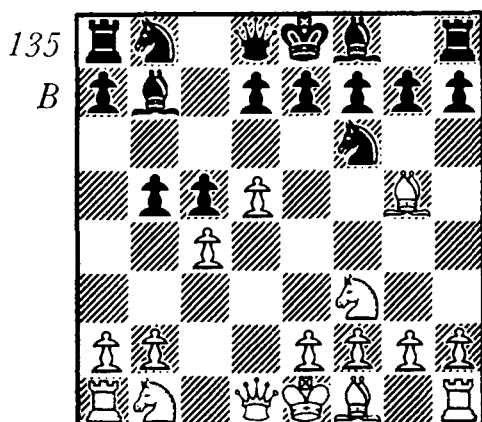
Klaman-Keres, 24th USSR
 Championship, Moscow 1957.

H29

5 ♜g5 (135)

5 ... ♜e4
 6 ♜c3 ♜xg5
 7 ♜xg5 b4

Riskier is 7 ... e6!? 8 ♖d2 b4 9



♖d1 ♕e7 10 ♖f3 0-0. The game Jacobsen-Spielmann, Copenhagen 1923, continued 11 e4 f5!? 12 ♕d3 d6 13 0-0 ♖d7 14 ♗c2 (if 14 dfe) 14 ... ♖e5 15 ♖×e5 de 16 ef (better is 16 f3, with control of the centre) 16 ... ed 17 cd ♕×d5 18 ♖e3 ♕b7 19 ♖ad1 ♗b6 20 ♕c4+ ♖h8 21 ♕d5± (21 ♖d7 is possibly stronger).

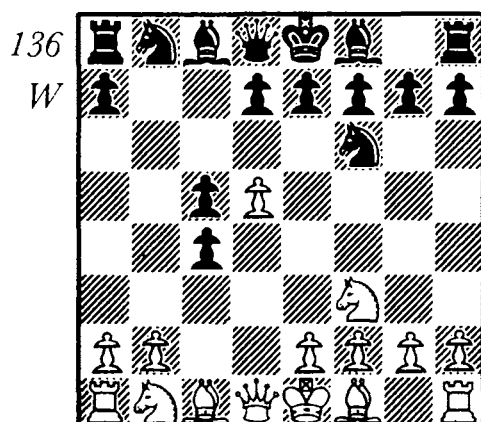
8 ♖ce4 h6
9 ♖f3 ♗a5
10 ♖ed2 g6
11 e4 d6
12 ♕d3 ♕g7
13 ♗c2 ♖bd7
14 0-0 0-0=

Jacobo Bolbochan-Maderna,
Mar del Plata 1956.

H3

4 ... bc (136)
5 ♖c3 d6
6 e4 g6

6 ... ♖bd7 is less accurate since the f6 knight may need the use of the d7 square if e5 becomes a threat. Tal-Diaz, Biel Interzonal 1976, went 7 ♕×c4 g6 (if 7 ... ♖b6? 8 ♕b5+ ♕d7 9 ♕e2 followed



by a4 and a5, embarrassing the b6 knight) 8 0-0 ♕g7 9 ♖e1 0-0 10 ♕g5 h6 11 ♕f4 g5? (better 11 ... ♖b8∞) 12 ♕c1 ♖g4 13 ♕e2±.

7 ♕×c4

7 ♖d2 ♕g7 8 ♖×c4 0-0 9 ♕e2 ♖bd7 10 0-0 ♕a6 11 ♖e1 ♖b8 12 a3 ♗c7 13 h3 ♖b7 14 ♗a4 ♕×c4 15 ♗×c4 ♖fb8 = Doda-Forintos, Belgrade 1961.

7 ... ♕g7

8 0-0

8 e5 de 9 ♖×e5 0-0 10 0-0 ♖fd7 11 ♖c6 ♖×c6 12 dc ♖b6 13 ♕e2 ♗c7 14 ♕f3 ♕a6 15 ♖e1 ♖ad8 16 ♗b3 ♕c4 ♣ Balashov-Stein, Moscow 1971.

8 ... 0-0

9 ♖e1 ♕g4

10 h3 ♕×f3

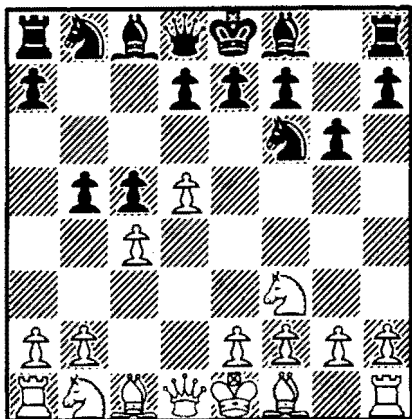
11 ♗×f3 ♖bd7=

Hort-Bilek, Kecskemet 1966, concluded 12 ♗e2 ♖b8 13 ♖b1 ♖e8 14 ♕d2 ♖c7 15 ♖b5 ♖×b5 16 ♕×b5 ½-½

H4

4 ... g6 (137)

5 ♗c2 bc

137
W

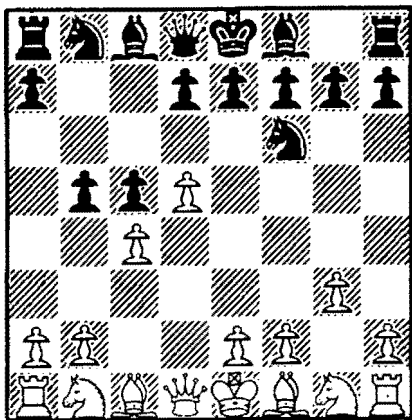
5 ... d6 6 e4 ♘g7 7 ♖c3 bc 8
♙xc4 0-0 9 0-0 transposes.

6 c4 d6
7 ♙xc4 ♘g7
8 0-0 0-0
9 ♖c3±

Pachman-Kraidman, Netanya
1975, and Pachman-Ludgate,
Haifa Olympiad 1976.

I

4 g3 (138)

138
B

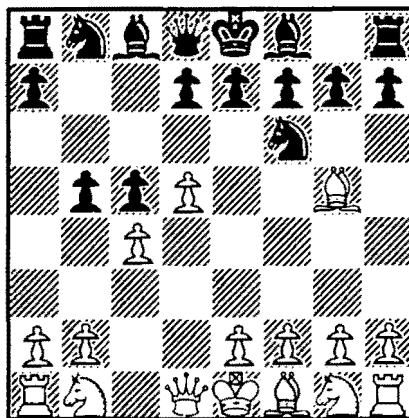
4 ... g6
5 ♘g2 d6
6 cb a6
7 b6 ♙xb6
8 ♖c3 ♘g7
9 ♖f3 0-0
10 0-0 a5

11 ♙d2 ♖a6
12 ♖e1 ♖c7
13 ♖c2 a4
14 ♖e3 ♙a6
15 ♙b1 ♙d7=

Banfálvi-Mihaljcsin, Debrecen
1968.

J

4 ♙g5 (139)

139
B

4 ... ♖e4
5 ♙f4 ♙a5+

Why not simply 5 ... bc?

6 ♖d2 d6
7 b4! ♙xb4
8 ♙b1 ♙c3
9 ♙xb5 ♖xd2
10 ♙xd2 ♙xc4
11 e3 ♙xa2
12 ♙c3 c6
13 ♙d3 ♙d7
14 de ♙xe6
15 ♖c2 d5
16 ♖f4 ♙d6
17 0-0 d4
18 ed ♙xf4
19 ♙c1+ ♙e7
20 ♙xc5±

Shashin-Dommcs, USSR 1971.

Opening Index

page numbers italicised

1 d4	♠f6	
2 c4	c5	
3 d5	b5	
4 cb		4 a4 110; 4 ♠a3 113; 4 b3 114; 4 ♠c2 115; 4 ♠d2 115; 4 e4 116; 4 f3 117; 4 ♠f3 117 (4 ... b4 118; 4 ... ♠b7 118; 4 ... bc 123; 4 ... g6 123); 4 g3 124; 4 ♠g5 124.
4 ...	a6	4 ... g6 100; 4 ... ♠b7 100.
5 ba		5 f3 96; 5 b6 84; 5 ... d6 84; 5 ... ♠xb6 86. 5 e3 g6 (5 ... d6 88; 5 ... ab 88) 6 ♠c3 (6 ♠f3 89) 6 ... ♠g7 7 a4 89; 7 ♠b3 89; 7 ♠f3 90; 7 e4 90; 7 ba 90; 7 ♠ge2 91. 6 ... d6 7 ♠f3 91; 7 ba 92; 7 a4 93; 7 ♠c4 94; 7 b6 94. 5 ♠c3 ab (5 ... d6 6 e4 g6 100; 5 ... ♠a5 103) 6 e4 100, 103; 6 ... b4 (6 ... d6 100) 7 ♠b5 (7 e5 100) 7 ... d6 (7 ... ♠xc4 100; 7 ... b3 100) 8 ♠f4 (8 ♠f3 108) 8 ... ♠xc4 104; 8 ... g5 105; 8 ... ♠a6 106; 8 ... ♠bd7 106.
5 ...	♠xa6	5 ... ♠xa6 46, 97; 5 ... g6 98; 5 ... d6 99
6 ♠c3		6 g3 d6 (6 ... g6 7 b3 46) 7 ♠g2 d6 8 ♠h3 46; 8 b3 46.
6 ...	d6	6 ... g6 7 g3 d6 8 ♠f3 (8 ♠h3 48; 8 ♠g2 ♠g7 9 e4 48; 9 ♠a4+ 48; 9 ♠f3 0-0 10 0-0 ♠bd7 48, 53; 9 ♠h3 48) 8 ... ♠g7 (8 ... ♠bd7 50) 9 ♠h3 (9 ♠g2 53) 9 ... ♠bd7 (9 ... 0-0 50) 10 0-0 51.

7 e4 systems

7 c4	♠xf1	7 ... g6 23
------	------	-------------

8 ♖xf1 g6
 9 g3 9 f4 24; 9 h3 24, 42; 9 ♘f3 24; 9 ♙f4 24; 9 ♘ge2 24; 9 g4 25; 9 f3 26
 9 h3 42, 24; 9... ♙g7 10 ♘f3 0-0 11 ♖g1 ♘bd7 42; 11... ♘a6 44; 11... e6 45
 9... ♙g7
 10 ♖g2 0-0
 11 ♘f3 11 ♘ge2 27; 11 f4 27.
 11... ♘bd7 11... ♘a6 27.
 Now: **12 ♜e1** ♘b6 29; 12... ♘g4 29; 12... ♖b8 30; 12... ♖c7 30; 12... ♖b6 31; 12... ♖a5 32.
12 ♖e2 ♘g4 34; 12... ♘b6 34; 12... ♖b8 34; 12... ♖a5 35.
12 h3 ♖c7 36; 12... ♘b6 36; 12... ♖a5 37; 12... ♖b6 39.
12 ♘d2 40, 74; 12... ♖b8 40; 12... ♘b6 40; 12... ♖a5 40.

7 g3 systems

7 g3 g6
 8 ♙g2 8 ♘f3 48
 8... ♙g7
 9 ♘f3 9 e4 48; 9 ♖a4+ 48.
 9... 0-0
 10 0-0 ♘bd7 48, 53
11 ♙f4 72; **11 ♙g5** 72; **11 ♘d2** ♖a5 12 ♖c2 63.
11 ♜b1 ♖b6 (11... ♖c7 53; 11... ♘e8 53; 11... ♘b6 53) **12 a3** (12 ♖c2 53; 12 ♙d2 53; 12 b3 53) 12... ♜fb8 54.
11 ♖c2
11... ♖c7 12 ♜d1 (12 ♜b1 55, 56; 12 ♙g5 72; 12 ♜e1 65) 12... ♜fb8 56.
11... ♖b6 12 ♜b1 56; 12 ♜d1 57; 12 ♜e1 58; 12 h3 58.
11... ♖a5 12 h3 59; 12 ♙g5 59; 12 ♜b1 60; 12 ♜e1 61; 12 ♜d1 62; 12 ♙d2 63; 12 ♘d2 63.

11 ♖e1

11 ... ♗b6 12 h3 (12 ♖c2 66, 58; 12 ♖b1 65; 12 c4 66) 12 ... ♖fb8 66.

11 ... ♗a5 12 ♖b1 (12 ♖c2 66, 60; 12 ♗d2 66; 12 h3 67; 12 c4 67; 12 a3 67) 12 ... ♖fb8 67.

11 ... ♖c7 12 ♗d2 68; 12 c4 68; 12 h3 68; 12 ♖c2 68; 12 ♖b1 68.

11 ... ♗b6 68.

11 h3 ♗b6 70; 11 ... ♖c7 70; 11 ... ♖b6 70; 11 ... ♖a5 70.

7 f4 system

7 f4

100.

The Benko Counter-Gambit represents the most important and dynamic contribution to opening theory for a quarter of a century. In return for a pawn Black secures the initiative for at least twenty moves and, paradoxically, Black can often stand better in the endgame even though he is a pawn down. In master chess Black's percentage score with the gambit has, in recent years, been very favourable, in comparison with the more traditional King's Indian and Nimzo. In fact all of the defences to 1 d4 the Benko Counter-Gambit has the best practical results.

In this volume the author presents the ideas behind the gambit together with an enormous amount of source material. This is certainly the most comprehensive work to appear on the opening and will be indispensable to all 1 d4 players and to those who are looking for an active defence to 1 d4.

David Levy is an International Master and an authority on the openings. His other Batsford books include *The Sicilian Dragon* and *Sicilian – Accelerated Dragons*.

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5 o-o Be7 6 Re1 b5 7 Bb3 o-o 8 c3 d5

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5 o-o Nxe4